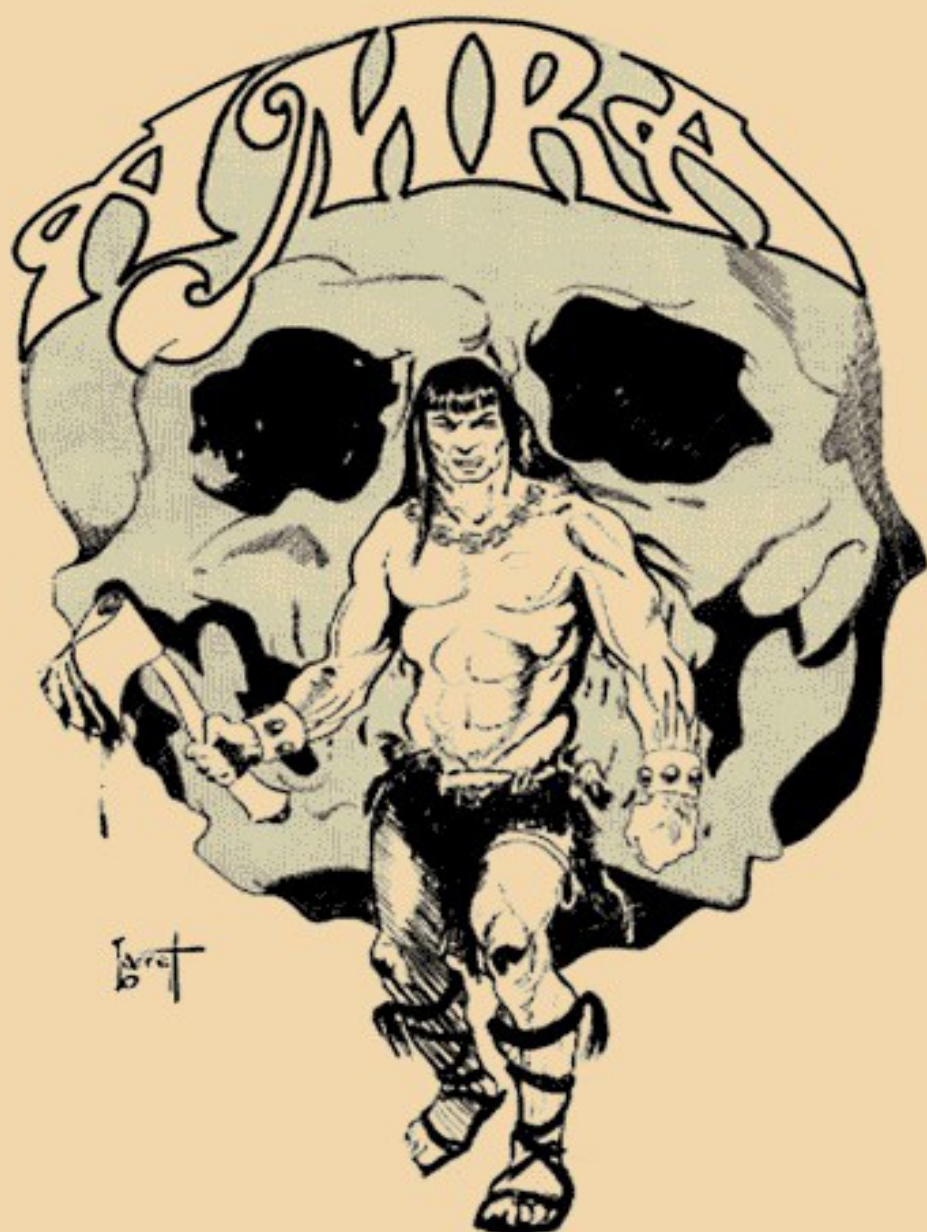


CONAN

COMPENDIUM



ARTICLES FROM AMRA EDITED BY
L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP

This *Conan Compendium* is a compilation of items that appeared in the Mirage Press collections: *The Conan Reader* (1968), *The Conan Swordbook* (1969), and *The Conan Grimoire* (1972), but were omitted from Ace Books' *The Blade of Conan* (1979) and *The Spell of Conan* (1980).

CONAN COMPENDIUM

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L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP

Acknowledgements

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Compiler's Note

The two **Ace Book** collections of *Amra* articles, gleaned from the **Mirage Press** trilogy, omitted a number of items, and this ebook rectifies the situation. The Exegesis (in this case, explaining the derivation of names) of Howard's Hyborian tales is a major item, and I've incorporated all of the later additions and added the 'discarded' version. Howard's letters to Preece, Derleth and Smith are also important, and I'd also add Anderson's translations to that list, though I can see why his fine version of *Sonatorrek* presented a problem: a long, narrow scroll of 25 8-line stanzas, that appeared in *Amra* as 3 columns side-by-side, takes up quite a few pages (as you'll find out for yourselves). I've left out two poems and a couple of drinking songs, and I don't think they'll be missed. As *The Blade of Conan* and *The Spell of Conan* also carried 14 items *not* included in the **Mirage** set, it's fair to say that these (now) three books give a comprehensive covering of the hallowed magazine.

Peter Mansfield
May 2, 2024

Hyboria and Adjacent Realms

An Exegesis of Howard's Hyborian Tales

by L. Sprague de Camp

The question of the names of persons and places in Robert E. Howard's stories of the Hyborian Age is connected with that of the influence of other writers on Howard. Let us see what we can learn of these matters.

In his celebrated letter to Donald Wollheim concerning Howard's **The Hyborian Age** (see **The Coming of Conan**, pp 13f) H.P. Lovecraft remarked that: "The only flaw in this stuff is REH's incurable tendency to devise names too closely resembling actual names of ancient history — names which, for us, have a very different set of associations. In many cases he does this designedly — on the theory that the familiar names descend from the fabulous realms he describes — but such a design is invalidated by the fact that we clearly know the etymology of many of the historic terms, hence cannot accept the pedigree he suggests."

Many of the personal names used by Howard in his series of Conan stories are ordinary Latin personal names (Publius, Constantius, Valeria) or Greek names (Dion, Pelias, Tiberias) or modern Italian versions of these (Publio, Tito, Demetrio). Others are modern Asiatic or Arabic names, sometimes modified (Aram Baksh, Yar Afzal, Jungir Khan, Bunda Chand, Shah Amurath) while still others are apparently made up (Thak, Thaug, Thog, Yara, Yog, Yogah, Zang, Zogar Sag). In **Red Nails** occur a number of Aztec or pseudo-Aztec names.

Perhaps Lovecraft had especially in mind the Asiatic names that originated in the conquests of Alexander the Great in the fourth century BC, or in those of the Muslim Arabs in the seventh AD. It is interesting to note that the three made-up names above beginning with "Th" are all the names of monsters.

Despite Lovecraft's criticism, Howard was really well-advised to use real ancient names and names derived from these, because his purely made-up names show a disagreeable sameness (Ka, Kaa-u, Ka-nu, Kaanub, Kananu; Thak, Thaug, Uiog; etc). The reason for this is probably a lack of linguistic sophistication on Howard's part. The borrowed names, on the other hand, are usually well-chosen and euphonious. They convey the glamor of antiquity by their near-familiarity, without being too difficult for the modern reader who,

being trained by sight-reading methods, is apt to boggle at any name more exotic than “Smith”.

Moreover, Lovecraft sometimes borrowed ancient names in exactly the manner which he chided Howard for doing (eg Menes, Kranon, Sarnath).

Howard’s geographical names come mainly from the more accessible bodies of myth: Classical (e g Stygia), Norse (Asgard), or Biblical (Kush); and from the kind of geographical lore to be had from an atlas. Howard’s must have been a good atlas, because some of the places that served as Howard’s prototypes are very obscure indeed.

Besides the names of obvious derivation, there are a number whose origin is more complex, showing fairly wide reading on Howard’s part. This brings us to the question of Howard’s sources.

Anybody who made a practice of reading *Adventure Magazine* during the 1920’s will at once recognize, in Howard’s stories, the influence of the historical adventure stories by Harold Lamb and Talbot Mundy, published in this magazine at this time. Lamb’s tales were usually set in an Asiatic locale, dealing with such events as the Crusades, the Mongol and Turkish conquests, and the rise of the Russian state. Howard’s stories of Conan and the *kozaki* are closely derived from Lamb’s yarns of sixteenth and seventeenth-century Cossacks.

Mundy’s stories were usually modern but were laid in India, Afghanistan, Tibet, or Egypt. Mundy’s picture of these countries is highly romanticized, full of assumptions of ancient sorceries and occult wisdom. Howard’s Stygia and Vendhya are essentially Mundy’s Egypt and India, respectively, with the names changed. There may have been some Kipling influence on Howard here also.

Besides Lamb and Mundy, Howard must have read many other stories in *Adventure*. A more thorough search would no doubt reveal derivations from some of the other leading adventure-story writers of the time, such as Frederick Faust, A.D. Howden Smith, and Sax Rohmer. The stories “Beyond the Black Forest” and “The Treasure of Trancos” are probably derived from the Indian-fighting novels of Robert W. Chambers, which were often laid in upstate New York in the late eighteenth century.

I also suspect — though I cannot prove — that Howard had read Howard Pyle’s **Men of Iron**, and that the cylindrical “Tower of the Elephant”, the cylindrical green tower in the post-Conan **Garden of Fear**, and the cities of green stone that recur in the Conan stories can ultimately be traced to Chapter

X of Pyle's book, wherein Myles Falworth and Francis Gascoyne explore the crumbling, ivy-covered Brutus Tower of Castle Devlen.

Although the larger part of Howard's knowledge of the medieval, ancient, and primitive worlds was probably derived from reading adventure fiction, he seems also to have read a fair amount of history, especially the history of the Muslim world during the Middle Ages. His knowledge of medieval North Africa, especially Egypt, was not negligible, as was shown by the original ms of "Hawks Over Shem" (entitled, before I rewrote it as a Conan story, "Hawks Over Egypt") which dealt with the reign and disappearance of the mad eleventh-century Caliph Hakim.

Howard also seems to have read Rosita Forbes' account of her 1920 expedition into the Libyan desert: **The Secret of the Sahara** (published 1921), to judge by his use of names like Darfar, Wadai, and Ajonga (q v), probably derived from the Darfur, Wadai, and Wajanga mentioned by Mrs Forbes. Other derivations from books of travel and exploration could probably be traced down.

The imaginative side of Howard's stories was derived mainly from Lovecraft and from Clark Ashton Smith, as is shown by several of Howard's names (Crom, Valusia, Commoria, etc). There may have been a Burroughs influence (see **Thuria**) though this seems to have taken the form of a general background, furnishing inspiration and fictional attitudes rather than specific characters, settings, or incidents — unless the repeated encounters of Howard's heroes with man-eating anthropoid apes are to be referred to John Carter's shindies with the white apes of Mars.

There is some slight evidence that Howard had read Eddison's **The Worm Ouroboros**: the Iron Tower of Tarantia and the Iron Tower of King Gorice of Carce; Eddison's Gallandus and Howard's Gallanus; the mention of Hyperboreans by both; Eddison's phrase "unsounded gulfs of time or space" (p 387) and the general resemblance of Gorice XII to Xaltotun. But these, I fear, are not conclusive. I have no evidence that Howard was influenced by Lord Dunsany — otherwise the most influential fantasy writer of the century, who laid the groundwork for the whole prehistoric adventure-fantasy genre — save indirectly through Lovecraft and Smith.

I have compiled a glossary of the names in Howard with their derivations, as far as I could trace them. I have not, however, included the names in the volumes **Tales of Conan** and **The Return of Conan**, because the names peculiar to these stories were chosen by Bjorn Nyberg and myself. To make

the glossary more compact, I have referred to the Conan stories by code, following that of the bibliography:

TE — The Tower of the Elephant
GB — The God in the Bowl
RH — Rogues in the House
FD — The Frost-Giant's Daughter
QC — Queen of the Black Coast
BC — Black Colossus
SM — Shadows in the Moonlight
WB — A Witch Shall be Born
SZ — Shadows in Zamboula
DI — The Devil in Iron
PC — The People of the Black Circle
SS — The Slithering Shadow
PO — The Pool of the Black One
RN — Red Nails
JG — Jewels of Gwahlur
BR — Beyond the Black River
TT — The Treasure of Trancos (ex-The Black Stranger)
PS — The Phoenix on the Sword
SC — The Scarlet Citadel
HD — Conan the Conqueror (ex-The Hour of the Dragon)

The King Kull stories and the essay **The Hyborian Age** (published in part, with additions by John D Clark, in **The Coming of Conan**, and in full, in its original form, in **Skull-face and Others**) are, however, referred to by name. Here is the glossary:

Abombi — In SC, a town of the blacks. From Abomey, Dahomey, French West Africa.

Acheron — In GB, a fallen empire. In Greek mythology, one of the four rivers of Hades; also the name of several rivers in ancient Greece, the largest being in Thesprotia.

Adonis — In QC, a Shemitish god. The Greek version of a Semitic vegetation-god, called Adonai ("Lord"), Tammuz, or (in Babylonia)

Dumuzi.

Aesir — In FD, QC, PS, etc, the people of Asgard. In Norse mythology, the chief gods (singular As); Odin, Thor, etc.

Afghulistan — In PC, a region of the Himelias. A mixture of Ghulistan (q. v) and Afghanistan. The Afghuli tribe, of which Conan becomes chief, lives there.

Agha — This occurs in the names of the Agha Shupras WB and Jehungir Agha DI. A Turkish title of respect (also *Aga*).

Aghrafur, Agrapur — In SZ and DI, the capital of Turan. After Agra, India, the site of the Taj Mahal, + the Hindustani *pur*, “town”.

Ahriman — In HD the Heart of Ahriman is a magical jewel. The evil god of Mazdaism or Zoroastrianism (Old Persian, *Angra Mainyu*, “evil spirit”).

Ajaga — In SC, a Kushite king. Perhaps from the same source as Ajonga (q.v.) {**Ajaga, Ajonga** — These might be derived from ajoga (or ajoka) which means “wizard” or “witch-doctor” in the language of the Lango of Uganda.}

Ajonga — In HD, a Negro galley slave. Possibly from Wajanga, a place in southern Libya mentioned by Mrs Forbes.

Akbatana, Akbitana — In BC and JG, a Shemitish city. From Agbatana or Ecbatana, the Graeco-Roman names for Hagmatana or Hangmatana, the capital of ancient Media.

Akif — In SZ, a Turanian city. A Turkish proper name; e g 'Akif Pasha, a 19th-century Turkish poet.

Akivasha — In HD, an evil immortal princess. From the Egyptian name (Ekwesh or Akkaiwasha) for the Achaioi or Achaeans.

Akkharim — In WB, a Shemitish nation. Possibly from Akkad (Agade) in ancient Iraq.

Akkutho — In SC, a former king of Koth. Possibly from the same source as Akkharim (q.v.).

Akrel — In PC, an oasis in the desert near Khauran.

Alafdhal, Yar Afzal — Respectively a Turanian guardsman in SZ and a Wazuli chief in PC. From al-Afdal (literally, “the most generous”) an Arabic name.

Albiona — In HD, an Aquilonian countess. From Albion, an old Celtic name for Britain. {An early Greek geographer paraphrased by the late-Roman poet Avienus — probably Pytheas of Massilia — mentions Britain as the “island of the Albiones”. A few other classical writers (e.g. Ptolemaeus) mention “Albion”.}

Alcemides — In WB, a Nemedian philosopher. From various Greek names like Alkides (Heracles), Alkimenes (Bellerophon’s brother), Alkman (a poet of the 7th century BC), etc.

Alimane — In HD, a river between Aquilonia and Zingara. Probably from Allemagne, French for “Germany”.

Alkmeenon — In JG, a deserted palace in Keshan. From one of the Greek names Alkman, Alkmaion, or Alkmêne.

Almuric — In SS and HD, a prince of Koth. From an early interplanetary novel by Howard, **Almuric**, published posthumously in *Weird Tales*; perhaps ultimately from Amalric (q.v.).

Altaku, Well of — In QC, a well in the Oasis of Aphaka.

Altaro — In HD, a Nemedian priest. Perhaps from Altare, Italy.

Amalric — In BC, a Nemedian soldier of fortune, and in HD, the Nemedian baron of Tor — perhaps intended as the same man, though the stories do not clearly so state. An old Germanic name (Gothic *Amalreiks*, French *Amaury*, English *Emory* or *Emery*) common in the Middle Ages; e.g. the name of two Christian kings of Jerusalem. Howard probably took the name from these last, as he wrote a historical novelette, **Gates of Empire** (pub. in *Golden Fleece*, 1–39) wherein one of these Kings Amalric of Jerusalem appears.

Amalrus — In SC, the king of Ophir. From Amalric (q.v.).

Amazons — A Negro nation mentioned in **The Hyborian Age**. In Classical legend, nations of warrior women in Asia Minor and North Africa. The legend is probably based upon the Sarmatians, a nomadic Iranic tribe of the Kuban, whose women were required to slay an enemy

before they might marry.

Amilius — A place in Aquilonia mentioned in HD. From Aemilia (modern Emilia), a province in northern Italy, and Aemilius, the corresponding Roman gentile name.

Amir — In PC, the Amir Jehun Pass is in Ghulistan. Arabic for “commander”.

Amra — In HD, the name, meaning “lion”, by which Conan was known when he sailed with the black corsairs. Possibly from Umra, the name of a 19th-century khan of Jandol. {I have never found a satisfactory derivation for AMRA. I suspect it’s connected with the Arabic ’amar, to command, or ’amr, a command.}

Amurath — In SM, Shah Amurath is a Turanian noble. A Turkish proper name, also rendered as Murad.

Anakim — In WB, a Shemitish nation. A race of tall mountaineers in southern Palestine before its conquest by Joshua, mentioned in Deuteronomy i, 26; ix, 2; Joshua xi, 21f.

Andarra — In SS, a dream place. From Andorra, a small Pyrenean principality.

Anu — In RH, a Hyborian god. The Babylonian sky-god.

Aphaka — In BC, an oasis in the Shemitish desert. Probably from Hor-al-Afaq (Afaq Lake), Iraq. {Probably from the Lebanese village known to the Classical Greeks as Aphaka, modern ’Afqa, near el-Munêтира. It was destroyed by a landslide in 1911.}

Aquilonia — In TE, QC, RH, etc., the Hyborian kingdom of which Conan becomes king. From *aquilo*, -onis, Latin for “north wind”.

Aram — In SZ, Aram Baksh is a villainous innkeeper of Zamboula. An Armenian proper name, going back to a king of Urartu in the 9th century BC. Also the Hebrew name for Syria, whence “Aramaic”.

Aratus — In SM, a Brythunian pirate. From the Greek proper name Aratos, borne by a statesman of the 3rd century BC among others.

Arbanus — In SC, the general of King Strabonus of Koth. From Artabanus, the Latin form of Artabanush, an Iranian name borne by four Parthian

kings among others.

Argos — In QC, UB, PO, etc., a maritime Hyborian nation. A Peloponnesian city in Classical Greece. Howard speaks of the people of his Argos as “Argosseans”, whereas the people of the historical Argos were called “Argives”.

Argus — In QC, an Argossean ship. From Argos, a Greek name borne by a mythical hundred-eyed giant, Odysseus’ dog, and others. c.f. “Argos”.

Arideus — In HD, the squire of Tarascus. Possibly from Philip Arrhidaeus (Arridaios), a half brother of Alexander the Great.

Arpello — In SC, an Aquilonian noble. Possibly from Rapallo, Italy, or Apelles, a Greek painter of the 4th century BC, or a combination of the two.

Arus — In GB, a Nemedian watchman; in the second part of **The Hyborian Age**, a Hemedian priest of Mitra, missionary to the Picts. Possibly from Area, the Greek god of war. {Possibly from Arûs, a medieval sultan of Wadai.}

Aryan, Aryas — In the prolegomenon to HD (see “Skull-Face and Others”, p. 360; “The Sword of Conan”, p. iv; and “Conan the Conqueror”, p.2) Howard speaks of the Hyborian Age as the time “between the years when the oceans drank Atlantis and the gleaming cities, and the years of the rise of the Sons of Aryas.” I do not know whether this “Aryas” is a man, a god, or an error for “sons of *the* Aryas,” though the last is likely. In the closing paragraphs of **The Hyborian Age**, Howard speaks of the Aryans as the people of mixed Vanir, Aesir, and Cimmerian descent who conquered wide lands in Europe and Asia after the Picts and Hyrkanians had overthrown the Hyborian nations, and a convulsion of nature sank much of the Hyborian land beneath the Atlantic Ocean and the North and Mediterranean Seas (see “Skull-Face and Others”, p. 206).

The true history of the term “Aryan” is complex, *Ârya* is a Sanskrit word meaning “noble”*. About 1000 BC, nomadic cattleraising barbarians calling themselves *Ârya* — “noble ones” — overran Iran and northern India. About the same time other nomads, speaking similar tongues, conquered most of Europe and parts of the Near East.

They ruled the natives, imposed their languages upon them, and finally mixed with them. On linguistic evidence, these nomads probably radiated out originally from what is now Poland. They were enabled to conquer their neighbors and their neighbors' neighbors by having been the first people to tame the horse.

In the 19th century, scholars discovered the kinship between the the speech of Iran and northern India on one hand and of Europe on the other, and also came upon this word *Ārya*. They called this family of languages "Indo-European" or, sometimes, "Aryan". Since then "Aryan" has been used in several senses: (a) the Indo-European family of languages; (b) the Indo-Iranian or Eastern branch of this family; (c) the original Indo-European-speaking horse-taming nomads; (d) the descendants of these nomads; (e) or, loosely, anybody of the Caucasoid race speaking an Indo-European language. Strictly speaking, the term has no racial meaning and is avoided by most scientists because of its equivocality.

In addition, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, "Aryan" was used by certain writers, cultists, demagogues, and politicians, who built up a pseudo-scientific cult about the supposedly pure and superior Aryan race. They used the term as a vague equivalent of "Nordic", which describes the tall blonde type of the Caucasoid or white race, found most often in northern Europe. Actually, there is no good reason to think that the original horsemen were Nordics. And, whatever their racial type, it soon disappeared by repeated intermixture with those they conquered.

Although, like other pulp writers of his time, Howard was given to the use of national and racial stereotypes, he was, as far as I can tell, no crackpot Aryanist. In the introduction to **The Hyborian Age** ("Skull-Face and Others", p. 190) he explained that "Nothing in this article is to be considered as an attempt to advance any theory in opposition to accepted history. It is simply a fictional back-ground for a series of fiction-stories."

Ascalante — In PS, an Aquilonian outlaw, formerly count of Thune. From Escalante, a town in Spain (near Santander). Howard probably took the name from that of Father Silvestre Vélez de Escalante, an 18th-century missionary who explored the southwestern United States and whose name is carried by several places (towns, a river, a mountain

range) in Colorado and Utah.

Asgalun, Askalon — A Shemitish city (or cities) mentioned in QC and in JG. From Ascalon (Ashkelon), an ancient city of Palestine.

Asgard — In FD, PS, and HD, a northern land (c.f. **Aesir**). In Norse mythology, the home of the Aesir or chief gods.

Ashtoteth — In Q.C, a Shemitish deity. (See **Ishtar**.)

Ashkaurian Dynasty — In WB, the ruling family of Khauran (q.v.).

Asshuri — In BC and VJB, Shemitish mercenary soldiers. From Asshur (Ashur, Ashshur), the original name of Assyria and its patron god.

Astreas — In WB, a Nemedian philosopher. Possibly from the Greek name Asterios, borne by the mythical Minotaur and others.

Asura — In JG and HD, a god of an eastern religion flourishing secretly in Aquilonia. In Indian mythology, a term for a god, spirit, or demon, cognate with the Persian *ahura*.

Atali — In FD, the daughter of Ymir.

Athemides — In SC, an Aquilonian scholar. Possibly from Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom, plus the gentile ending *-ides*.

Athicus — In RH, a prison guard. From Aethicus, a Byzantine geographer.

Altaians — A Negro nation mentioned in **The Hyborian Age**. Probably from “Atlas” (c.f. **Atlantis**).

Atlantis — An imaginary sunken continent in the Atlantic Ocean, invented by Plato for his dialogues **Timaios** and **Kritias** and named after the demigod Atlas; used by Howard (along with many fantasy writers, geographical speculators, and cultists) as part of the background for his King Kull stories and mentioned in TE, PC, and the prolegomenon to HD.

Attalus — In PS and HD, an Aquilonian barony. A common Macedonian personal name (originally Attalos) borne in Roman times by three kings of Pergamon in Asia Minor.

Ayodhya — In PC, the capital of Vendhya. From Ayuthya, the former capital of Thailand, and Ayodha, the legendary capital of India in the Golden

Age of King Rama.

Aztrias Petanius — In GB, a Nemedian noble. (c.f. **Astreas**.)

Baal — In HD, a minion of Xaltotun. From *ba'al*, Hebrew-Phoenician for “lord”. (c.f. **Bel**, **Baal-Pteor**.)

Baal-Pteor — In SZ and TI, a Kosalan strangler. From Baal-Peor, a place in Moat (Numbers xxv). (c.f. **Pteor**.)

Badb — In PS, a Cimmerian deity. An Irish goddess, properly Badhbh (pronounced “bawv”).

Bakhariot, Bakhauriot — In WB and PC, an adjective describing a kind of broad belt. From, Bokhara, Turkestan.

Baksh — See **Aram**. Probably from *bakshi*, *bakshish*, terms used in the Near East and India for “giver” and “gratuity” respectively (from the Persian *bakhshi*, *bakhshish*, or the Arabic *baqshîsh*).

Balthus — In BR, a young Turanian settler in Conajohara. Possibly from Baltia, a Latin name for Scandinavia, whence the Baltic Sea.

Baracha — In PO, JG, and TT, an archipelago in the Western Ocean, used as a pirate base. From Barataria, Louisiana, used as a base in the early 19th century by the pirate Jean Lafitte.

Bel — In TE, QC, BC, etc., the Shemitish god of thieves. An Assyro-Babylonian word meaning “lord” (cognate with the Hebrew-Phoenician *ba'al*) applied originally to En-lil, an old Babylonian earth-god, and later to Marduk, the Babylonian Zeus.

Belesa, Beloso — Respectively, the Zingaran heroine of TT and a Zingaran man-at-arms in HD. There is a Belesa River in Ethiopia, but the connection is doubtful. Another possible derivation is from Berosos (or Berossus, etc.), a Hellenized Babylonian priest of Marduk and writer of the early 3rd century BC.

Bêlit — In Q.C, a Shemitish woman pirate. Assyro-Babylonian for “goddess”.

Belverus — In HD, the capital of Nemedi. Possibly from Belverde, Italy.

Bhuhda — In PC, Bhunda Chad is the king of Vendhya. From various Indian

place-names: Bund, Bhabdara, etc.

Bît-Yakin — In JG, a Pelishti wizard. In Assyrian times, the capital of Chaldea (Kaldi) or, sometimes, Chaldea itself.

Blaal — A Valusian barony mentioned in the Kull stories. (c.f. **Baal**.)

Bossonian Marches — In GB and BR to HD, the western frontier province of Aquilonia. Perhaps from Bossiney, a former Parliamentary borough in Cornwall, England, which Included Tintagel Castle, connected with the Arthurian legends.

Bragi — In FD, a chief of the Vanir. The Norse god of poetry.

Brule — A Pictish henchman of King Kull in the Kull stories.

Brythunia — In IE, SM, DI, etc., an easterly Hyborian land. From Britannia, Latin for “Britain”.

Caranthes — In GB, a priest of Ibis. Possibly from Carinthia, an alpine province of Austria. (c.f. **Corinthia**.)

Chand — See **Bhunda**. An Indian proper name. [The name at that entry should be spelled Bhunda Chand.]

Cherkees — In UB, an adjective designating a broad, curved knife. From Cherkess, a name for the Circassians or Adighe of the Caucasus.

Chicmec — In RN, a man of Xuchotl. From the Chichimecs, a tribe of Mexican Indians.

Chiron — In HD, a minion of Xaltotun. A wise centaur (Cheiron) of Greek myth. Howard was probably thinking also of Charon, in Greek mythology the supernatural boatman who ferried souls across the River Styx.

Chunder — In QC, Chunder Shan is the governor of Peshkauri. A common Indian proper name, better spelled Chandra.

Cimmeria, Cimmerians — In all the Conan stories, a land and people north of the Hyborian nations, from whom the Gaels or Celts are descended. Historically, the Gimirai or Cimmerians were a nomadic people who invaded Asia Minor in the 7th century BC; the modern Armenian language is derived from theirs. In Homer, a people (the Kimmerioi)

living in a foggy western land.

Commorla — In TE, a kingdom of Atlantean times. From Commoriom, the capital of Hyperborea in Clark Ashton Smith's stories, **The Testament of Athammaus**, etc. Ultimately, probably, from Comaria or Comorin, the cape at the southern tip of India.

Conajohara — In BR, a region on the Aquilonian frontier between the Black and Thunder Rivers. From Canajoharie, a town on the Mohawk River, New York State. Upstate New York also has a Black River, and Howard probably derived both town and river from Robert W. Chambers' stories.

Conan — The hero of the Conan stories, a gigantic Cimmerian adventurer. A common Celtic name; from Conann, a king of the Fomorians (Fomór, pronounced "fuh-wore", or Fomhóraigh, "fuh-wo-ry") in Irish mythology, in which Conann was killed in battle with the Nemedians (q.v.). Howard also wrote stories of medieval Ireland, not connected with the Hyborian Age series, in which the hero was named Conan or Conn.

Constantius — In WB, a Kothic adventurer. The name of three 4th-century Roman emperors.

Corinthia — In SM and JG, a maritime Hyborian nation. From Corinth (Korinthos), a rich city in Classical Greece, plus Carinthia, an Austrian province.

Crom — In all the Conan stories, the chief Cimmerian god and Conan's favorite oath. Irish for "bent", as in Crom Cruaich, "The Bloody Bent One", a famous Irish pagan idol. Probably suggested to Howard by H.P. Lovecraft's story, **The Shadow Out of Time**, which mentions "Crom-Ya, a Cimmerian chieftan of 15,000 BC."

Ctesphon — In TT and PS, the king of Stygia. From Ctesiphon, an ancient ruined city in Iraq, near Baghdad, which flourished in Roman times.

Cush — See **Kush**.

Dagon, Dagonia — In DI, Dagonia is an ancient kingdom on the Vilayet Dea and Dagon its ruined capital on Xapur. In JG, Dagon is a god of Zembabwei. Dagon was a fish-god of the Philistines and Phoenicians.

Dagoth — In SC, a hill in Koth. Probably from Dagon (q.v.) plus Koth (q.v.).

Dagozai — In PC, a Himelian or Ghulistani tribe. Probably from **Dagon** (q.v.) plus the Pakhtun (or Pashtun, Pathan) tribal ending *-zai* (from *zoe*, “son”) as in Ghilzai, Abmedzai, Yusufzai, etc., modern Pakhtun tribes.

Darfar — In SZ and RN, a land of Negro cannibals. Howard derived this name from the region of Darfur in north-central Africa. Now, Darfur is an Arabic name, meaning simply Abode (*Dâr*) of the Fûr (or For), the dominant Negroid people of the area. However, in changing the name to Darfar, Howard unwittingly changed the meaning, in Arabic, from “Abode of the Fûr” to “Abode of Mice” (*fâr*)! The original Darfur is now the westernmost part of the Sudanese Republic.

Demetrio — In HD, an Argossean sea-captain. Italian for Demetrios, a Greek name (from Demeter, goddess of agriculture).

Derketa. — In RN, a Kushite goddess. From Derketo (q.v.).

Derketo — In QC, BC, SS, etc., a Shemitish and Stygian goddess, also worshipped in Zembabwei. A Greek name for the Syrian fertility-goddess 'Atar'ata. (c.f. **Ishtar**.)

Devi — In PC, the title of the sister of the king of Vendhya. Hindi for “goddess”.

Diomus — In GB, a Nemedian prefect. From Dianus (an old spelling of the Roman god Janus) and Dion (q.v.).

Dion — In PS, an Aquilonian noble. A Greek name borne by a tyrant of Syracuse in the 4th century BC.

Djebal, Gebal, Jhebbal — Djebal is a Zuagir in WB, Gebal a Shemitish servant in HD, and Jhebbal Sag a Pictish god in BR. All are from the Arabic *jabal* or *jebel*, “mountain”.

Eallal — In **The Shadow Kingdom**, a former king of Valusia. A combination of Ea, the Babylonian Creator and god of water, and Enlil, the Babylonian earth god. Another variant of the name appears in Howard's story **The Voice of El-Lil**, in *Oriental Stories*, 10–30.

Emilius — In HD, Emilius Scavonus is an Aquilonian noble. A Roman

gentile name, more properly Aemilius. (c.f. **Amilius**.)

Enaros — In WB, a Nemedian charioteer. Probably from Inaros, the Greek name of a Lybian rebel against the Persian rule in Egypt, mentioned by Herodotos; the original Egyptian form of the name was probably An-ha-heru-ra-u.

Epimetreus — In PS, a long-dead sage. From Greek names such as Epimetheus (Pandora's husband).

Erlik — In SZ, a Turanian god. From Ellak and Ernak, two sons of Attila the Hun. Howard also brought the "priests of Erlik" into a story with a modern setting: **Black Hound of Death** (*Weird Tales*, 11–36).

Eruk — In QC, a Shemitish city-state. From ancient Uruk, Erech, or Orchoê, Babylonia (modern Warka, Iraq).

Escelan — In RN, a man of Xuchotl.

Ferdrugo — A king of Zingara mentioned in TT.

Galaccus — In TT, a Kothic pirate. Latin for "a Galacian".

Galannus — See **Servius**. Probably from either the Roman emperor Galienus or from Gallandus, a Carcean captain in E R Eddison's "The Worm Ouroboros",

Galbro — In TT, a Zingaran seneschal.

Galparan, Galporan — In HD, a place in western Aquilonia.

Galzai — In PC, a Himelian or Ghulistani tribe. From the Ghilzai, a modern Afghan-Pakhtun tribe.

Gebal — See **Djebal**.

Gebellez. — In TT, a Zingaran.

Ghanara, Ghanata — Adjectives used in SZ and HD respectively to designate a desert south of Stygia and its people. From Ghana, a medieval Negro empire in the western Sudan. The name has been revived for the Dominion of the Commonwealth formerly called the Gold Coast.

Ghazan — "Ghazan wine" is mentioned in SZ. A 13th-century Mongol II-Khan (viceroy) of Iran.

Ghaznavi — In DI, a Turanian councilor. From Ghaznavid, an adjective designating the dynasty founded by the 11th-century Afghan conqueror Mahmud of Ghazna, which in turn is the town called “Gazaka” in ancient times.

Ghor — In PC, a place in Afghulistan. From Ghor or Ghur, a medieval Afghan kingdom. (Ghor is also the name of the Dead Sea Valley in Palestine, but Howard probably derived the name from the other source.)

Ghori — In DI, a fort near Khawarizm. A sub-province of modern Afghanistan. The adjective “Ghorid” designates the medieval dynasts of Ghor (q.v.).

Ghulistan — In PC, a region of the Himelian Mountains. A compound made of the Arabic *ghul*, “ghoul”, and the Persian *istan*, “country”; hence: “land of the ghouls”.

Gilzan — In DI, a Shemitish torturer. From the Ghilzai, an Afghan tribe

Gitara — In PC, Yasmina’s maid. From *gitana*, Spanish for “gypsy” (female). Like the English “gypsy”, the word is a corruption of that for “Egyptian”. (c.f. **Zingara**.)

Golamira — In PS, a magical mountain.

Goralian Hills — In HD, a region in western Aquilonia. Possibly from the Goralians or Gorales, mountaineers of southern Poland.

Gorm — In FD, an As (See **Aesir**); in **The Hyborian Age** (Part II), a Pictish chief after Conan’s time. The first king of Denmark, in the 10th century.

Gorulga — In JG, a Keshian priest. Possibly from the Goruol River, in French West Africa.

Gromel — In PS, a Bossonian commanding Conan’s Black Legion.

Grondar — A kingdom of Atlantean times mentioned in **The Hyborian Age**. Possibly from Gondar, a province of Ethiopia.

Gullah — In BR, the Pictish gorilla-god. One of a group of American Negroes living along the coast of Georgia and speaking a distinctive Afro-American dialect.

Gunderland, Gundermen — In TE, GB, RH, etc., the northernmost province of Aquilonia and its people. Probably from Gunther (Gundicar) or Gunderic, 5th-century kings of the Burgundians.

Gurasha — In PC, a valley in Ghulistan.

Gwahlur — In JG, the Teeth of Gwahlur are the treasure of Alkmeenon. From Gwalior, India.

Gwarunga — In JG, a Keshian priest. Possibly from Garua, West Africa.

Gwawela — In BR, a Pictish village. {Although this sounds like the name of a real place, perhaps slightly disguised, I have not found a convincing derivation. True, there is or was a town of Gwala in the upper Nile Valley, and Gwalia is an old name for Wales. There is also Gwalior, India (c.f. **Gwahlur**) but none satisfies.}

Hadrathus — In HD, a priest of Asura. Possibly from the Roman name Hadrianus.

Hanuman — In SZ and TT, a monkey-god of Zamboula. The Indian monkey-god.

Hanumar — In GB, a Nemedian city. From Hanuman (q.v.).

Heimdul — In FD, a Vanir. From Heimdall, in Norse myth the guardian of the gates of Valhalla.

Himelias — In PC and HD, a mountain range north or northwest of Vendhya. From the Himalayas or Himalayan Mountains.

Horsa — In FD, an As. (See **Aesir**) A half-legendary Saxon chief who, with his brother Hengist, led the Saxon invasion of Britain.

Hyborean, Hyborian — In KN, BR, TT, etc., the race that overthrew the empire of Acheron and set up in its place the kingdoms of Aquilonia, Nemedias, Brythunia, Hyperborea, Argos, and the Border Kingdom. From Hyperborea (q.v.).

Hymetrio — In GB, a Nemedian magistrate. From Demetrio (q.v.).

Hyperborea — In IE and GB, a northeastern land. In Greek legend, a happy land in the Far North. The name means “beyond the North Wind”.

Hyrkania, Hyrcania — In TE, QC, BC, etc., the land east of the Vilayet

Sea. The Turanians are also of Hyrkanian origin and are commonly called Hyrkanians. In Classical geography, a region southeast of the Caspian Sea (also called the Hyrcanian Sea) corresponding roughly to modern Mazandaran plus Asterbad, Iran. The name is Greek for the old Persian Varkana, one of the satrapies of the Achaemenid Empire, and survives in the name of the River Gurgan; the original meaning may have been “Wolfland”. Hyrkania was briefly an independent kingdom in the 1st century AD. In Iranian legend, Hyrkania was a land remarkable for its wizards and demons.

Ibis — In GB, a god. Any of several species of heron-like birds, one of which, *Threskiornis aethiopica*, was held sacred in ancient Egypt.

Ilbars — In SM, a Turanian river. From Elburz Mountains, Iran.

Irakzai — In PC, a Himelian tribe. From the Orakzai, a Pakhtun tribe of West Pakistan, (c.f. **Dagozai**.)

Iranistan — In PC, an eastern land corresponding to modern Iran. From Iran plus the Persian *istan*, “country”.

Irem — In SM, Shah Amurath’s horse. From “ancient Irem, the City of Pillars” spoken of by H.P. Lovecraft in **The Nameless City**, and perhaps ultimately from Iram, a legendary Iranian character mentioned in Fitzgerald’s **Omar Khayyám**. {Also spelled Iran, ’Iram. In Arabian legend, a deserted city in Yaman. The pre-Muslim king, Shaddâd ’ibni-’Âd, built it of gold and jewels in order to outdo Paradise, laying the kings of all the earth under tribute to do so; but then ’Allah jealously slew him and all his people on their way to occupy the city. See “The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night (Burton Translation), Vol. IV, pp. 113ff: **The City of Many-Columned Iram and Abdullah Son of Abi Kilabah**. Howard probably got the name through Lovecraft.}

Ishtar — In QC, BC, SM, etc., a Shemitish goddess also worshipped in the Hyborian nations. The Assyro-Babylonian goddess of love (Hebrew *Ashtoreth*, Phoenician ’Atar’ata, Syrian *Atargatis*, Greek *Astartê*).

Ivanos — In SM, a Corinthian pirate. From Ivan, Russian for “John”, plus the Greek masculine ending -os.

Ivga — In WE, Valerius’ sweetheart. Possibly from Inga, a Norwegian

female given name.

Jehun — See **Amir**. From Shah Jahan or Jehan, a 17th-century Mughal emperor.

Jehungir, Jungir — Jehungir is a Turanian lord in DI, while Jungir Khan is another in SZ. From the name of the Mughan emperor Jahangir, meaning “World-conqueror”.

Jelal — In DI, Jelal Khan is a Turanian noble. An Arabic proper name (better, Jalal).

Jhebbal — See **Djebal**.

Jhelai — In PC, a place in Vendhya. From the Jhelam or Jhelum River, West Pakistan.

Jhil — A supernatural being mentioned in BR. Probably from Jhal, India, or possibly derived from Chil, the kite, in Kipling’s “The Second Jungle Book”.

Jhumda — In PC, a river in Vendhya. From the rivers Jamna or Jumna in India and Jhelam in West Pakistan. (c.f. **Jhelai**.)

Joka — In RH, a servant of Nabonidus. Possibly from the Djukas, tribal Negroes of Surinam, in South America.

Jugra — In PC, a Wazuli village. A name for the Magyars or Hungarians.

Ka — The “bird of creation” mentioned in **The Shadow Kingdom**.

Kaanuub — In the Kull stories, a Valusian baron.

Kaa-u — A place of Atlantean times mentioned in **The Shadow Kingdom**.

Kallian — In GB, Kallian Podarco is an art-dealer. From the Greek name Kallias.

Kamelia — In TE, a kingdom of Atlantean times. Possibly from the camellia, a shrub of the tea family bearing large white flowers, or from Camelot, King Arthur’s legendary capital.

Kananu — A Valusian councillor mentioned in **The Mirrors of Tuzun Thune**.

Ka-Nu — In **The Shadow Kingdom**, a Pictish chief.

Karaban — In PS, an Aquilonian county. Possibly from Karaman, Turkey.

Kerim — In PC, Kerim Shah is a Turanian spy in Vendhya. An Indian proper name.

Keshan, Keshia — In JG, a black kingdom and its capital respectively. Possibly from Kashan (town and province), Iran. {A more likely derivation is from Kesh or Kash, an ancient Egyptian name for the land corresponding roughly to modern Nubia, or the Northern Sudan. Hence the Hebrew (and Howard's) Kush.}

Khan — See **Jehungir, Khosru**. A Turko-Tartar word meaning “lord” or Prince.

Kharamun — In SZ, a southeastern desert. Possibly from Karaman, Turkey. (c.f. **Karaban**.)

Khauran — In WB, a small southeastern Hyborian kingdom. Probably from Mt Hauran, Syria.

Khawarizm, Khawarism — In DI, a Turanian city near the southern end of the Sea of Vilayet. From Khwarasm or Chorasnia, a medieval Muslim kingdom in Turkestan; modern Khurasan or Khorassan, Iran. The name comes from the Old Persian *Huvarazmish*, a satrapy of the Achaemenid Empire.

Khel — See **Khosatral Khel**. Possibly from the Sea of Ghel (or Ghelan or Gilyan), a medieval name for the Caspian, or (more likely) from *khel*, a Pakhtu word for family or sept, e.g. “Mal Khel Mahsud”, a man of the Mal family of the Mahsud tribe.

Khemi — In QC, SZ, TT, etc., the main seaport and administrative capital of Stygia. From Kamt, Kam, Chêm, or Chêmia, ancient names for Egypt, probably connected with *qam*, “black”, or “Khem”, an Egyptian god of fertility.

Khemsä — In PC, a wizard serving the Black Circle. From the Khamseh, a tribe of Arabian origin in southern Iran.

Khitai, Khitans — In TE, RH, WB, etc., a far-eastern land and its inhabitants. From Khitan, a medieval Tatar word for China, whence the English “Cathay”.

Khoraja, Khorala — Respectively, a snail southern Hythorian city-state in BC and the source of the jewel “Star of Khorala” in SZ. The first syllable is probably from *khōr*, Arabic for “water”, which occurs in many place-names like Khorsabad. (c.f. **Afhaka**.) Khor was also the ancient Egyptian name for the land of the Khurri or Hurrians.

Khorbul — In PC, a city in the Himelias. From the Arabic *khōr* (c.f. **Khoraja**) and Kabul, Afghanistan.

Khorotas — In HD, the Aquilonian river on which Tarantia stands. Probably from *khōr* (c.f. **Khoraja**) plus the Eurotas, the Greek river on which Sparta stood (the modern Iri or Evrotos).

Khorshemish — In SC, the capital of Koth. From *khōr* (c.f. **Khoraja**) and the ancient Syrian city of Carchemish, later called Europus.

Khorusun, Khurusun — In DI and PC, a Turanian city. From Khurasan, Iran (c.f. **Khawarism**).

Khosala — See **Kosala**.

Khosatral Khel — In DI, a demon who ruled Dagonia. “Khosatral” is possibly a combination of Khusbal Khan, a 17th-century Fakhtun poet and leader, and Chitral, a Pakhtun tribe. (See **Khel**.)

Khosru — In PC, Khosru Khan is the governor of Secunderam. The name of several Iranian kings (also Khusru, Khosrau, or Chosroês).

Khossus — A king of Khoraja in BC and of Koth in SC. From Knossos or Cnossus, the capital of Minoan Crete.

Khotan — In BC, Thugra Khotan is the real name of Natohk, the veiled prophet. A river and a town in Sinkiang, or Chinese Turkestan.

Khrosha — A volcanic region in Koth alluded to in SM and HD. Possibly from Khorshid, Iran.

Khumeanigase — In WB, the general of Constantius’ Shemitish mercenaries. A king of Elam (modern Khuzistan) in the 8th century BC.

Khurakzai — In PC, a Himelian tribe. From Khuram, Afghanistan, plus -zai (c.f. **Dagozai, Khurum**).

Khurum — In PC, a Wazuli village and a legendary Amir. From Khuram, Afghanistan.

Khurusun — See **Khorusun**.

Kordava — In P0, TT, and HD, the capital and main seaport of Zingara. From Córdoba (Cordoba), Spain.

Korveka — A place mentioned in WB. (c.f. **Korvela**.)

Korvela — In TT, a bay on the Plctish coast, so named by Zingaran settlers. Possibly connected with *caravela*, Portuguese for a small lateen-rigged ship or caravel.

Korzetta — In TT, a county of Zingara. Possibly suggested by Gorizia and Caporetto in northeastern Italy, or by Khorbetta (Hurbeit, Bilbeis, ancient Pharbaëthos) in Egypt.

Kosala, Khosala — An eastern nation alluded to in SZ, PC, and RN. From Kosala or Koshala, a kingdom in northern India in the time of Buddha, 563–483 BC.

Koth — In TE, QC, SM, etc., a southern Hyborian kingdom. From Howard's early science-fiction novel **Almuric** and, ultimately, probably from the "Sign of Koth" in H. P. Lovecraft's *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath*.

Kozak — In SM, WB, DI, etc., one of a brotherhood of outlaws in Turan and Hyrkania. Russian for "Cossak", from the Turkish *quzak*, "adventurer".

Krallides — In WB, a Khauranian councilor. (c.f. **Trallibes**)

Kshatriyas — In PC, the Vendhyans or their ruling caste. The warrior caste of ancient India.

Kull — In the Kull stories, the Atlantean king of Valusia.

Kush, Cush — In QC, DI, PO, etc., a maritime black kingdom bordering Stygia; the Hyborians loosely call all Negroes "Kushites". From the Biblical Cush, generally identified with Ethiopia, though some would locate it in Arabia or Khuzistan.

Kutamun — In BC, a Stygian prince. Possibly from the Kutama, a medieval

Berber tribe of Algeria.

Kuth — In SS, a dream-place. Probably from Koth (q.v.).

Kuthchemes — In BC, a ruined city in the Shemitish desert. From the Hindustani *kut*, “fort”, (as in Kut-al-Amara, “fort of the princes”) plus Chemmis (ancient Khemmis, Shmim, Apu, or Panopolis; modern Akhmîm), Egypt.

Kyros — A wine-growing place mentioned in HD. The Greek spelling of Cyrus (Old Persian, Kûrush).

Laranaga — In HD, a Negro galley-slave.

Lemuria — In TE, an eastern archipelago of Atlantean times. A hypothetical land bridge from India to South Africa, invented by 19th-century scientists to explain the distribution of lemurs; later, in theosophical and other occult doctrines, a sunken continent in the Indian or the Pacific Ocean, contemporary with Atlantis (q.v.).

Lir — In SS, a god by whom Conan swears. The Irish sea-god. (Lir is the genitive; the nominative is properly Lér.)

Lotus — In TE, the powder of the black lotus of Khitai is a deadly poison, while the “fumes” of the yellow lotus are a narcotic; in HD the smoke of the burning pollen of the black lotus is a powerful narcotic. In RH, the dust of the gray lotus, which grows beyond Khitai, is a deadly poison. In SC, the juice of the purple lotus of Stygia paralyzes. In SM, the juice of the golden lotus restores sanity. In Homer, the fruit of the lotus (probably the jujube, the shrub *Zizyphus* and its relatives) reduces people to a dreamy, lethargic, and forgetful state. In modern botany, any of several Old-World water lilies of the genera *Nelumbo* and *Nymphaea*.

Luxur — In TT and HD, the capital of Stygia. From Luxor, Egypt (from the Arabic al-Aqsar or al-Uqsar, called in ancient times Wesi, No-Amun, or Thebes).

Maat-Neb — In TT, a Stygian prince.

Macha — In PS, a Cimmerian deity. From Emain Macha (pronounced *ev-in ma-kha*), Cúchulainn’s home in Irish mythology.

Mannanan — In SS, a god by whom Conan swears. From Manannán (pronounced mah-nah-nyawn), in Irish mythology a sea-god, the son of Lér.

Maul — In (IE) and FD, the thieves' quarter in a Zamorian (so Howard spells the adjective) city — possibly Shadizar.

Mentupherra — A king of Stygia mentioned in TT.

Mesmerism — An obsolete name for hypnotism, after its discoverer Franz Anton Mesmer (1733–1815), an Austrian physician; used in this sense by Howard in SZ and PC.

Messantia — In PO and HD, the main seaport of Argos. Probably from Messina, Italy.

Mitra — In GB, RH, QC, etc., a Hyborian god. In Indian mythology, a sun-god, cognate with the Persian Mithra or Mithras.

Morrigan — In PS, a Cimmerian deity. An Irish goddess, who appears in Arthurian legend in the guise of Morgan le Fay.

Mu — A land of Atlantean times, mentioned in **The Shadow Kingdom**. In occult doctrines, a lost continent in the Pacific Ocean, usually identified with Lemuria, but distinguished therefrom by Howard. The concept is derived from the speculations of Brasseur, le Plongeon (who used “Mu” as a native name for Atlantis) and Churchward (who affixed it to a hypothetical Pacific continent, corresponding to the Pan or Lemuria of other occultists).

Muriela — In JG, a Corinthian dancing girl. From the feminine proper name Muriel.

Murilo — In RH, a noble of a small unnamed city-state west of Zamora. Probably from Murillo, a 17th-century Spanish painter.

Nabonidus — In RH, a priest in a small unnamed city-state west of Zamora. The Latinized name of Nabu-naidu, the last Babylonian king.

Nafertari — In DI, the mistress of the satrap Jungir Khan. From Nefertiti, wife of King Ikhnaton of Egypt (Amenhotep IV, 14th century BC). {probably not as originally stated from Nefertiti, but from Nefertari, the name of several Egyptian queens.}

Namedides, Nimedides — In TT to HD, a king of Aquilonia overthrown and slain by Conan. From Numa (q.v.) plus the Greek gentile suffix *-ides*. Howard used both spellings.

Natala — In SS, a Brythunian girl. Presumably from the feminine proper name Natalie or Natalia.

Natohk — In BC, the name used by Thugra Khotan, the Veiled One. “Khotan” (q.v.) backwards.

Nemain — In PS, a Cimmerian deity. An Irish goddess.

Nemedia, Nemedians — In TE, GB, QC, etc., a powerful Hyborian kingdom and its people. In Irish mythology, the Nemedians were the descendants of the Scythian chief Nemed and were among the first invaders of Ireland. (c.f. Conan.)

N’gora — In QC, a sub-chief of the black corsairs.

Nimed — In HD, the king of Nemedia (q.v.). From Nemed, in Irish mythology a Scythian chief whose descendants invaded Ireland.

Niord — In FD, an As. (See **Aesir**.) From Njorth or Njörth, one of the Vanir of Norse mythology.

Nippur — In BC, a Shemitish city-state. A city of ancient Babylonia.

Nordheim — In QC, the land of the Aesir and the Vanir. A medieval German place-name, meaning “North Home”.

Numa — In PS, a king of Nemedia. — legendary king of early Rome.

Numalia — In GB, a Nemedian city. From Numa (q.v.).

N’yaga — In QC, a black pirate.

Octavia — In DI, a Nemedian girl. The feminine form of the Roman personal name Octavius.

Olgerd — In WB, Olgerd Vladislav is a Zaporoskan chief of the Zuagirs. From Olgierd, a 14th-century grand duke of Lithuania.

Olivia — In SM, an Ophirean princess. An Italian and English feminine proper name.

Olmec — In RN, a chief of Xuchotl. From the Olmecs, a tribe of Mexican Indians.

Ophir — In TE, QC, SM, etc., a Hyborian kingdom. A gold-producing region in the Old Testament, probably on the Red Sea or the Indian Ocean — e.g. western Arabia.

Orastes — In HD, a former priest of Mitra. From Orestes, in Greek myth the son of Agamemnon.

Ortho — A pirate alluded to in RN. Possibly from Otho, a Roman name

Paikang — In WB, a city in Khitai. From Peking, China.

Palian Way — In GB, a street in Numalia. Possibly from the River Pallia, a tributary of the Tiber in Italy.

Pallantides — In PS and HD, an Aquilonian general. In Greek mythology, a collective name for the 50 sons of Pallas, uncle of Theseus, who slew all the Pallantides in a struggle for the throne of Athens..

Pelias — In SC, a Kothian wizard. In Greek myth, a king of Iolkos and the wicked uncle of Jason.

Pelishtim — In WB, DI, and JG, a Shemitish nation. Hebrew for the Philistines, from which “Palestine” is also derived. Howard uses “Pelishtim” as a singular, whereas, to follow the inflectional system of the Semitic languages consistently, it should be “Pelishti”.

Pellia. — In SC and (HD)}, a principality in Aquilonia. Probably from Pella, the ancient capital of Macedonia.

Peshkauri — In PC, a city in northwestern Vendhya. From Peshawar, West Pakistan.

Petreus — In RH, a conspirator against Nabonidus. From Petrus, the Latin form of Peter (Greek, *Petros*),

Picts — In TE, GB, BR, etc., the primitive inhabitants of Pictland, along the west coast. The primitive pre-British inhabitants of Britain, whose remnants were finally absorbed by the Scots. Their language was non-Celtic but of unknown relationships, and they lived in fortified stone villages.

Podarco — See **Kallian**. {I think I’ve traced the name “Podarco”, which is ignored in the “Exegesis” listing for the ill-fated Nemedian art collector Kallian Podarco. Podarkes (“Bear-Foot”) was a son of King

Laomedon of Troy, whom Herakles spared alone of his kin when he sacked the city. From this happening, Podarkes was renamed Priamos (“Redeemed”), and entered history later as King Priam. (*John Boardman*)}

Poitain, Poitan — In TT to HD, the southernmost province of Aquilonia, at times independent of that kingdom. From Poitou, a French province. Howard used the first spelling for the country, but spelled the adjective “Poitanian”.

Postoumo — In GB, a Numalian policeman. From the Roman name Posthumus.

Promero — In GB, a Nemedian clerk.

Prospero — In PS and HD, a Poitanian supporter of Conan. The magician in Shakespeare’s “Tempest”.

Pteor — In JG, the god of the Felishtim. From Baal-Peor (see **Baal-Pteor**).

Public — In HD, an Argossean merchant, Italian for Publius (q.v.),

Publius — In TT to HD, the chancellor of Aquilonia. A Roman personal name.

Punt — In RN and JG, a Negro kingdom, A place with which the ancient Egyptians traded, probably Somaliland.

Python — In HD, the capital of the fallen empire of Acheron, In Greek mythology, a great snake slain by Apollo at Delphi; hence, in modern zoö’logy, a genus of large constrictor snakes found in Africa, Asia, and Australia; also, a Greek, personal name.

Rakhsha — In PC, a kind of oriental wizard. From *rakhasa*, a class of demons in Hindu mythology.

Rammon — A wizard or priest alluded to in PS. From Rimmon or Raraman, a Semitic storm-god,

Rinaldo — In PS and SC, a mad Aquilonian poet. An Italian proper name (equivalent to *Ronald*); one of the heroes of Ariosto’s **Orlando Furioso**.

Sabatea — A sinister southern place mentioned in HD. From the ancient

Arabian kingdoms of Sabaea (Sheba) and Nabataea, or the Arabian city of Sabata (mod, Sawa), or a combination of these.

Salome — In WB, the wicked twin sister of Taramis (q.v.). In Matthew xiv, the daughter of Herodias.

Sancha — In PO, a Zingaren girl, the daughter of the Duke of Kordava, A Spanish and Provençal feminine proper name.

Satha — In SC, a giant snake. From Sathanas, a Greek form of Satan.

Scavonus — See **Emilius**, Perhaps from Savona, Italy.

Secunderam — In PC, a city between Turan and Vendhya, under Turanian rule. From Secunderabad (Sikandarabad, “Alexander’s place”), India, named for Sikander Lodi of Jaunpur (fl. 1500) whose name in turn comes from that of Alexander the Great.

Sergius — In SM, a Kothic pirate chief. A Roman gentile name.

Servio — In HD, a Messantian innkeeper. Italian for Servius (q.v.).

Servius — In HD, Servius Galannus is an Aquiloniaa noble. A Roman gentile name.

Set — In GB, QC, BC, etc., the Stygian serpent-god. In ancient Egypt, a jackal-headed war-god or (later) a god of evil, called Sêth or Typhon by the Greeks.

Shadizar — In PO and SC, the capital of Zamora. Possibly from Shanidar, Iraq. (c.f. **Shalizah**.)

Shah — See **Amurath**, **Kerim**. Persian for “king”.

Shahpur — In DI, a Turanian city. The name of several cities in Iran and India, meaning “king’s town”.

Shalizah — In PC, a pass in Ghulistan. Possibly from the Shalamar Gardens, Lahore, India.

Shamar — In SC, an Aquilonian city. Probably from the Jabal Shammar, a range in Arabia.

Shamla — In BC, a pass in Khoraja. From any of various Asiatic places: Shamil, Iran; Simla, India; Shamlegh, a village on the Indian-Tibetan border mentioned in Kipling’s “Kim”, etc.

Shamu — In SC, a plain in Ophir. Probably from Shamo, a Chinese name for the Gobi Desert.

Shan — See **Chunder**. Chinese for “mountain”, though Howard may have made up the word by combining “Khan” and “Shah”.

Shem — In TE, QC, BC, etc., a land south of the Hyborian nations, divided into city-states. In the Bible, Noah’s eldest son, the ancestor of the Hebrews, Arabs, and Assyrians; hence the modern “Semite” and “Semitic” (via the Greek Sêm), used properly to designate the family of languages spoken by these peoples.

Shevatas — In BC; a Zamorian thief. Possibly from Thevatata, a figure in Indian mythology, or Thevatat, a sorcerer-king of Atlantis in Theosophical pseudo-history (which is also derived from the Indian original).

Shirki — In HD, a river in western Aquilonia. Possibly from *shikari*, an Indo-Iranian word for “hunter”.

Shukeli — In SC, a eunuch. Possibly from Shukriya, a Sudanese tribe.

Shimir — In QC and BC, a Shemitish city-state. From Shumer or Sumer, the land of the Sumerians, the pre-Semitic inhabitants of ancient Iraq.

Shupras — In BC, the Agha Shupras is a Khorajan councilor. Possibly from Shuqra, Arabia. (c.f. **Agha**)

Shusnan — In BC, a Shemitish river; in DI, a Shemitish city. One of the names of ancient Shusha, Sousa, Susa, Shush, or Sus, Iran; the capital of ancient Elam, Elymais, Hûja, Uvja, Kissia, Goution, or Sousiana (modern Khuzistan).

Skelos — An ancient author of magical books mentioned in BC, DI, PC, etc. Probably from “skeleton”, which means “dried up” in Greek. The Greek word *skelos* means “leg”.

Soractus — In BR, an Aquilonian woodsman. From Mt. Soracte, Italy.

Strabonus — In SC, the king of Koth. From Strabon (Latin *Strabo*), a common Greek name, whose most eminent bearer, Strabon of Amasia, was a 1st-century Greek geographer.

Strombanni — In TT, an Argossean pirate captain.

Styx, Stygia — In TE, QC, WB, etc., a river and a kingdom south of Shem, from whose people the Egyptians are descended. In Greek mythology, the Styx (genitive, *Stygos*) was the largest of the four rivers of Hades. The name was also applied to a real river in Arcadia and means “horror” or “hateful thing”. Stygia comes from the related adjective *stygios*, -a, -on, “Stygian” or “abominated”.

Sukhmet — In RN, a southern frontier city in Stygia. From Sekhmet (Sekhet or Skhemit), a lion-headed Egyptian goddess.

Sultanapur — In DI, a Turanian city. From Sultanpur (“sultan’s town”), India.

Tachic — In RN, a man of Xuchotl.

Tamar — In SC, the capital of Aquilonia, elsewhere called “Tarantia” (q.v.). Probably from the city of Tamar (“Palm Tree”) mentioned in 1 Kings ix, 18; this in turn is probably an error for Tadmor (Palmyra) in Syria.

Tanasul — In HD, a place in western Aquilonia.

Taramis — In WB, the queen of Khauran. From the Russian feminine name Tamira, or Tamara, a medieval queen of Georgia; ultimately from Tomyris, a Scythian queen in battle with whom Cyrus the Great is said by Herodotos to have lost his life.

Tarantia — In TT and HD, the capital of Aquilonia. Probably from Taranto (ancient Tarentum, Taras), Italy. There is also a range of Taranta Mountains in Nubia. In SC the name is changed, probably by Howard’s oversight, to “Tamar” (q.v.).

Tarascus — In HD, the brother of the king of Nemedi. Possibly from Tarascon, France, or (less probably) from the Tarascan Indians of Mexico.

Tarim — In DI and PC, a Turanian god. A river in Sinkiang.

Tascela — In RN, a princess of Xuchotl. Probably from Tlascala or Tlaxcala, Mexico.

Tauran — In BR and TT, a northwestern province of Aquilonia. Probably from the Taurini, an ancient Ligurian people for whom Torino (Turin, ancient Augusta Taurinorum) is named.

Taurus — In TE, a Nemedian chief; in BC, chancellor of Khoraja. Latin for “bull”; the Greek cognate *tauros* was also used as a personal name.

Techotl — In RN, a man of Xuchotl. From Techotlala, a 14th-century aztec chief.

Tecuhltli — In RN, one of the feuding clans of Xuchotl. From *tecuhltli*, Aztec (or, more precisely, Nahuatl) for “grandfather” or “councilor”.

Tezcoti — In RN, a chamber in Xuchotl. Possibly from Tezcoco or Texcoco, Mexico.

Thak — In RN, a man-ape. Possibly from the Hindi *thag*, “thug”. (See THUGRA.) For the reality of such carnivorous apes, see **Zembabwei**.

Thalis — In SS, a Stygian woman living in Xuthal. Probably a combination of Thais, a Greek feminine name and the Alexandrian heroine of a novel by Anatole France and an opera based thereon by Jules Massenet, and Thales, a pioneer Ionian philosopher who lived in Miletos around 600 BC. The best-known historical Thais was an Athenian courtesan who became the mistress of Ptolemy I of Egypt.

Thaug — In WB, a toad-demon. Possibly from the Hindi *thag*, “thug”. (See **Thugra**.)

Thespides, Thespius — Respectively, a Khorajan councilor in BC and a renegade Aquilonian count in HD. From Thespis, a Greek poet of the 6th century BC.

Thog — In SS, the demon-god of Xuthal. Possibly from the hindi *thag*, “thug” (see **Thugra**) or “Goth” backward.

Thoth-Amon — In GB, TT, PS, etc., a Stygian sorcerer-priest. A compound of the Greek names for two Egyptian gods, Tehuti and Amun. Howard also used Thoth-Amon’s copper ring and its attendant baboon-demon in a story with a modern setting, **The Haunter of the Ring** (*Weird Tales*, 6–34)

Thothmekri — In HD, a dead priest of Set. From Thoth (see **Thoth-Amon**) plus Mekri (Mikerê or Merykara), a 10th-dynasty king of Egypt.

Thrallos — In HD, a fountain outside the city of Belverus. (c.f. **Trallibes**.)

Thugra — In BC, Thugra Khotan is an ancient Stygian wizard brought back

to life under the name of Natohk. Perhaps from “thug” (Hindi *thag*, pronounced “t’hug”), a member of an Indian cult of ritual murderers who strangled people in honor of Kali until suppressed in the 19th century; or, less probably, from the Hindi *thâkur* (Sanskrit *thakkura*), “nobleman” or “gentleman”. (c.f. **Khotan**.)

Thune — In PS, an Aquilonian county; also part of the name of the wizard in **The Mirrors of Tuzun Thune**, one of the Kull stories. Possibly from Thulê, in classical geography a rumored island north of Europe, variously identified with the Shetland and Orkney islands and with Norway.

Thuria — In “The Hyborian Age”, the main (Eurasian) continent of Atlantean times. In Burroughs’ Martian tales, the Martian name of Phobos, the nearer of the two Martian moons. In ancient Greece there was a minor town of this name (Thouria) in the Peloponnesos, but it is unlikely that the name of so obscure a place was known either to Burroughs or to Howard.

Thuthmes — In HD, a Stygian priest. From Thothmes (or Thoutmosis, Tehuti-mesu), the name of several 18th-dynasty kings of Egypt.

Thutmekri — In JG, a Stygian adventurer. (See **Thothmekri**.)

Tiberias — In BR, an Aquilonian trader; in HD, an Aquilonian noble. An ancient town in Palestine, modern Tabariya.

Tiberio — In HD, Publio’s secretary. Italian for Tiberius, a Roman personal name.

Tina — In TT, a young Ophirean girl. Diminutive of the feminine names Albertina, Christina, Clementina, etc.

Tito — In QC, an Argossean sea-captain. Italian for Titus, a Roman personal name.

Tlazitlan — In RN, the race that built Xuchotl. Possibly from Tizatlan, Mexico; or a combination of Tlascala or Tlaxcala, Mexico, and Aztlan, a place in Aztec mythology.

Tolkemec — In RN, a wizard of Xuchotl. Perhaps a combination of Toltec and Chichemec, two dynasties or dominant tribes from early Aztec history.

Topal — In RN, a man of Xuchotl. Possibly from copal, a resinous gum collected from various tropical American trees.

Tor — In HD, a Nemedian barony. The word means “hill” or “peak” in English.

Tortage — In PO, a pirate town in the Barachas. From Tortuga (Spanish for “tortoise”), the name of two Caribbean islands.

Tothra — In SS, a dream-place.

Totrasmek — In SZ, a priest of Hanuman.

Trallibes — In TT, a place on the coast of the Western Ocean. Possibly from Tralles in Roman Asia Minor.

Tranicos — In TT, a pirate admiral. Possibly from the Portuguese name Trancoso.

Trocero — In TT to HD, the count of Poitain. Possibly from the Trocadero Palace, a museum in Paris whose name has been appropriated by many American movie theaters.

Tsotha-Lanti — In SC, a Kothian wizard.

Tu — In **The Shadow Kingdom**, a Valusian councilor.

Turan — In WB, DI, QC, etc., the kingdom set up west of the Vilayet Sea by Hyrkanian invaders. The Old Persian name for Turkestan. In Firdausi’s **Shah Nameh**, the main repository of ancient Persian legend, Feridun (Thraetaona) divided the world among his three sons, giving Rum (Europe) to Silim, Turan to Tur, and Iran to Irij. Much of the **Shah Nameh** is taken up with the efforts of King Afrasiyab (Frangrasiyan) of Turan to conquer Iran, and his successive defeats by the Persian hero Rustem under various kings of Iran.

Tuscelan — In BR, an Aquilonian fort on the Pictish frontier. From ancient Tusculum, Italy.

Tuthamon — In HD, a former king of Stygia, the father of Akivasha. From the same sources as Thoth-Amon (q.v.).

Tuzun Thune — In **The Mirrors of Tuzun Thune**, a Valusian wizard. (See **Thune**.)

Tybor — In SC, a river in southeastern Aquilonia. From the Tiber River, Italy.

Upas — A poisonous tree alluded to in TE and PS. A Javanese tree, *Antigris toxicaria*, yielding a poisonous sap; formerly reputed to destroy any living thing near it.

Valannus — In BR, an Aquilonian officer commanding Fort Tuscelan; in HD, another Aquilonian officer.

Valannus — In HD, a Zingaran robber-count. From Vallombroso (“Shady Valley”), Italy.

Valenso — In TT, a Zingaran count. Probably from Valencia, Spain, which in turn is from the Roman Valentia.

Valeria — In RN, an Aquilonian woman pirate. The feminine form of Valerius (q.v.).

Valerius — In WB, a young Khaurani soldier; in HD, an Aquilonian noble. A Roman gentile name.

Valka — A god mentioned in the Kull stories. (c.f. **Valkia**.)

Valkia — In HD, a river and its valley in eastern Aquilonia. Possibly from Valkyrie (Old Norse *valkyrja*), in Norse mythology one of Odin’s maidens.

Valusia — In the Kull stories and TE, a kingdom of Atlantean times. From “the reptile people of ancient Valusia” alluded to by H. P. Lovecraft in **The Shadow Out of Time**. The place-name Volusia occurs in Florida and New York State, possibly connected with the Volusci or Volsci of ancient Italy.

Vanaheim — In FD, TT, PS, etc., a northern land. In Norse mythology, the home of the Vanir (q.v.).

Vanir — In FD and QC, the people of Vanaheim (q.v.). In Norse mythology, a class of deities, originally of fertility and later of weather, agriculture, and commerce.

Vateesa — In BC, a Khorajan lady. Probably from Vanessa, a name constructed by Dean Swift from that of his sweetheart Esther Vanhomrigh.

Vathelos, Vezek — Respectively, the blind author of magical books in BC and a Turanian outpost in WB. Possibly from Vathek, William Beckford's spelling of the name of the 9th-century Caliph Wathiq, in Beckford's Gothic novel (1786) of that name.

Velitrium — In BR a frontier city on the western border of Aquilonia. From Velitrae (modern Velletri), Italy.

Venarjum — A frontier fort in Gunderland referred to in BR; probably from Virunum, capital of Roman Noricum — near modern Klagenfurt, Austria.

Vendhya — In WB, PC, TT, etc., a land to the far southeast, corresponding to modern India. From the Vindhya Mountains, India. The name means “rent” or “ragged”, i.e. having many passes.

Verulia — A kingdom of Atlantean times, mentioned in **The Hyborian Age**. Probably from Verulamium, a Romano-British town, later Verulam; near modern St. Albans.

Vilayet — In SM, DI, BR, etc., the inland sea east of Turan, corresponding to the modern Caspian (also called, in former times, the Hyrcanian Sea and the Sea of Ghel). Turkish for “province”.

Vladislav — See **Olgerd**. A Russian proper name.

Volmana — In PS, an Aquilonian noble. Possibly from the Vomano River, Italy.

Voivode — In WB, the title of the mercenary captain Constantius. A title of medieval Slavic generals and governors, and of Rômanian princes.

Wadai — In SZ, a Negro country. A part of the Chad Colony of French Equatorial Africa; also, a powerful Negro kingdom in that region, conquered by France in 1908–1912. (in view of the unsettled state of the British and French possessions and former possessions in Africa, I have not tried to bring my geographical references to those regions up to date.)

Wazam — In PC, the title of the prime minister of Vendhya. From the Arabic *wâzir*, “minister” (literally, “burden-bearer”).

Wazuli — In PC, a Himelian tribe. From the Wazirs, a Pakhtun tribe of West

Pakistan (formerly Northwest India). Burroughs used “Waziri” as the name of an African tribe.

Wulfhere — In FD, an Aesir chief. An old Saxon name.

Xaltotun — In HD, an Acheronian wizard. Probably from Xultun, Mexico.

Xamec — In RN, a man of Xuchotl.

Xapur — In TE, an island in the Sea of Vilayet. Probably from Shahpur (q.v.).

Xatmec — In RN, a man of Xuchotl.

Xotalanc — In RN, one of the fleeing clans of Xuchotl. Probably from Xicalanco, Mexico.

Xuchotl — In RN, a city south of Darfar. Probably from Xochitl, in the semi-legendary Toltec period of Aztec history a lady who popularized the drink *pulque*.

Xuthal, Xuthol — In SS, a city south of Kush. The former spelling is Howard’s; the latter appears only on Kyle’s end-paper map.

Yag — In TE and SC, a distant planet. From Howard’s novel ALMUR1C (q.v.).

Yag-Kosha or **Yogah** — In TE, an elephant-headed native of Yag (q.v.).

Yagkoolan — An expletive that occurs in SM (“... the bird . . . cried out harshly: ‘*Yagkoolan yok tha, xuthallal*’ ”) and in SC (“ ‘Yag-koolan Ishtar!’ murmured the stranger.”) From context one would guess it to mean something like “glorify!” or “bless us!” Possibly from Yaxchilan, a city of the so-called Mayan Old Empire (founded circa +514) on the Guatemalan side of the Usumacinta River, which divides northern Guatemala from the Mexican state of Chiapas. Mayan x = English *sh*.

Yajur — In SZ, a god of Kosala. From Yajur-Veda, a section of the Vedas (Hindu scriptures) dealing with ritual.

Yanath — In RN, a man of Xuchotl.

Yar — See **Alafdhal**. A Pakhtun name.

Yara — In TE, the high priest of Zamora. There is or was a town of this

name in Gojjam Province, Ethiopia; derivation doubtful.

Yasala — In RN, a woman of Xuchotl.

Yasmela, Yasmina — Respectively the queen regent of Khoraja in BC and the Devi of Vendhya in PC. From the Arabic *yasmin*, “jasmine”, whence the feminine names, Arabic *Yasmin* and *Hindi* Yasmini.

Yasunga — In HD, a Negro galley-slave.

Yateli — In DI, a Dagonian girl.

Yelaya — In JG, a long-dead princess of Alkmeenon. Possibly from the Spanish surname Zelaya, e.g. Jose Santos Zelaya, dictator of Nicaragua, 1893–1909.

Yezdigerd — In DI and PC, the king of Turan. From Yazdegerd or Yezdjird, the name of three kings of Sassanid Persia, including the last Sassanid king before the Arab conquest.

Yezud — In PC, the Zamorian spider-god. Possibly from the Yezidis or “devil-worshippers”, a Mazdean sect among the Kurds of Armenia and the Caucasus.

Yildiz — In SM, the king of Turan. A Turkish name; e.g., the Yildiz Palace in Istanbul. {This (to be more exact, “yildiz”, pronounced approximately “yull-duzz”) turns out to be the Turkish word for “star”. One sees many signs in Istanbul advertizing the Yildiz This or That Co. Moreover, among the Turks, “Yildiz” is sometimes used as a woman’s name, but never as a man’s.}

Yimsha — In PC, the mountain stronghold of the Black Circle. Possibly from Yashina, In Soviet Azarbaijan.

Yizil — In PC, a god or demon. Probably from the Turkish *kizil*, “red”, which appears in many geographical names.

Ymir — In FD, PS, and SC, a supernatural giant. In Norse mythology, a primeval giant.

Yog — In DI, a Zamboulán god.

Yogah — See **Yag-Kosha**.

Yota-Pong — A place in Kosala referred to in JG.

Yothga — In SC, a magical plant.

Yuetshi — In DI, a primitive tribe living around the southern end of the Sea of Vilayet. From the Yue-Chi or Kushans, a Turko-Tatar tribe that conquered an Indian empire in the 1st century AD.

Yun — In TE, a Khitan god.

Zabhela — A coastal place mentioned in RN. Possibly from the same source as Zargheba (q.v.).

Zaheemi — In BC, a clan living near the Pass of Shamla.

Zalgara — A hill region mentioned in the Kull stories. (c.f. **Zingara**.)

Zamboula — In SZ and TT, a city in the southeastern deserts. From Stamboul, a French spelling of Istanbul, the former Constantinople or Byzantium. There is also a village of Baraboula in Cyprus, but it is unlikely that Howard ever heard of so obscure a place.

Zamora — In TE, QC, SM, etc., an ancient kingdom east of the Hyborian lands. A town and a province in northwestern Spain.

Zang — In WB, a priest.

Zaporavo, Zaporoska — Respectively, a Zingaran pirate captain in PO and a Hyrkanian river in WB and HD. From “Zaporogian”, which in turn is from the Russian *Zaporozhets*, “beyond the rapids”, used in the 16th and 17th centuries to designate the Dniepr Cossacks.

Zerallo — In RN, the chief of a band of mercenaries in Stygian service.

Zargheba, Zarkheba — Respectively, a Shemitish adventurer in JG and a southern river in QC. Possibly from Zariba, Arabia.

Zarrono — In TT, a Zingaran buccaneer captain.

Zelatta — In HD, an Aquilonian wise-woman. Possibly from the Spanish surname Zelaya (c.f. **Yelaya**).

Zembabwei — In JG, a black kingdom. From Zimbabwe, a ruined fortified town in Rhodesia, built about a thousand years ago. The builders are not known for sure, but they may have been Malayan or Arab traders or gold-seekers. The name is simply modern Matabele for “stone houses”. The same name was used by Howard, in the form

“Zambabwei”, in a story, **The Grisly Horror**, In *Weird Tales*, 2–35. This tale, although laid in the southern United States, alluded to Zambabwei as a place in Africa where people are sacrificed to a man-eating ape. Howard used, in this latter story, his well-worn episode of a combat between a man and such an ape, which also occurred in SM, HD, and **The Flame-Knife** (in “Tales of Conan”). The last-named was originally laid in modern Afghanistan, the hero being another of Howard’s alter egos, John Gordon, and the title being **Three-Bladed Doom**. By a strange coincidence, the discovery in 1957, in China, of a complete jaw of a *Gigantopithecus* revealed that a race of gigantic omnivorous apes, weighing about twice as much as a modern gorilla, lived in Asia during the Pleistocene period. There are indications that the creature caught other animals with its bare hands and dragged them to its cave to eat.

Zenobia — In HD, a Nemedian girl. The Greek version of the name of Septimia Bath-Zabbai or Bat-Zabdai, queen of Palmyra in the 3d century.

Zhaibar — In PC, a pass in the northwest of Vendhya. From the Khaibar (Khyber) Pass, West Pakistan (formerly Northwest India). I am told that Howard’s description closely follows that in Mundy’s “King of the Khyber Rifles”.

Zhemri — In **The Hyborian Age**, a people surviving from Atlantean times to become the Zamorians.

Zingara — In QC, WB, BR, etc., a southwestern maritime kingdom. Italian for “gypsy” (female). (c.f. **gitara**.)

Zingg — In **The Hyborian Age**, the valley in which the nation of Zingara (q.v.) arose. {Possibly from the Zing, a Sudanese people mentioned by Mas’ûdi.}

Zlanath — In RN, a man of Xuchotl.

Zogar Sag — In BR, a Pictish wizard.

Zorathus — In HD, a Kothic merchant. Probably from Zaratas, a Greek form of Zoroaster (Old Persian *Zarathushtra*, modern *Zardusht*).

Zorgelitas — In TT, a Zingaran.

Zuad — A lake referred to in RN. From Zuar and Lake Chad, French West Africa.

Zuagir — In WB, SZ, RN, etc., Shemitish nomads dwelling in the eastern deserts. Probably from the Shagia (Shaigiya or Shaikiyeh), a tribe of Egyptian Arabs, and the Zouia or Zuia, a tribe of Lybian Arabs. (c.f. **Zuad**.)

Zugites — In BC, an ancient and degraded Stygian cult. Possibly from “thug” (c.f. **thugra**).

ADDENDA TO THE EXEGESIS

A few points concerning the sources of the names and ideas in Howard’s Hyborian stories have come up since I finished AN EXEGESIS OF HOWARD’S HYBORIAN TALES.

Of apes and supermen: Howard wrote at least five stories in which there was a fight between a man and an anthropoid ape. Two were stories in the original Conan canon: **Black Shadows in the Moonlight** and **Conan the Conqueror**. Another was an unpublished story laid in modern Afghanistan, **Three-Bladed Doom**, which I rewrote as a Conan story, **The Flame Knife**. Another, **The Grisly Horror** (*Weird Tales*, 2–35) was laid in the modern United States.

Now I have found still another: **Red Shadows** (*Weird Tales*, 8–28). This is a Solomon Kane story, but one that was not included in the Arkham House collection, “Skull-Face and Others”. In *Red Shadows* (typical Howard title!) Kane is about to be slain by an African when a gorilla kills the Negro, who had previously killed its mate.

In his later use of this theme, Howard made his apes, not mere gorillas, but huge man-eating anthropoids. It is delightful to learn that such creatures, it seems, once really lived. In 1957; Chinese paleontologists found in Kwangsi the jawbone of such a super-ape or ape-man, previously known from other and more fragmentary remains as *Gigantopithecus*. The evidence is that the creature weighed about twice as much as a modern gorilla (that is, about 1,000 pounds), that it was omnivorous, and that it seized its victims with its bare hands and dragged them up a cliffside to its cave to devour. (See *Archaeology*, 12–57, PP 287f.)

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An Exegesis of Names Discarded by R. E. H.

by L. Sprague de Camp

In writing the Conan stories, Robert E. Howard normally made two or three drafts of each story. He kept the earlier drafts, most of which have come into the hands of my colleague Glenn Lord, bibliographer of Howard, publisher of *The Howard Collector*, and agent for the Howard estate. Glenn has obtained nonfinal drafts of all the completed Conan stories save WB (the rough draft of which was lent to his friend Barlow and not returned) and RH, the first draft of which became the published version.

In many of these stories, Howard changed the names of one or more places and persons in the course of writing. Glenn has furnished me with a list of these name changes, grouped by the stories in which they appear. I shall present this list with my own inferences as to the sources of these names, as I did in the original "Exegesis of Howard's Hyborian Tales".

The name in capitals at the beginning of each entry is the name that appears in the nonfinal draft but that was later changed or omitted. A name immediately following, preceded by = and surrounded by parentheses, is the name that appears in the published version. The notation "q.v." (*quod vide*) refers to the corresponding entry in the original "Exegesis", either as it appeared scattered through various issues of *Amra* or in its consolidated form in my **The Conan Reader** (Baltimore: Mirage Press, 1968). When the discarded form is thought to be derived from the same source as the final one, the "q.v." is placed inside the parentheses. When no alternative in the parentheses appears after the form at the beginning of the entry, this means that Howard dropped the name altogether in the final version, mentioning the person or place either in general terms only or not at all.

Without making an exhaustive study, I get the impression that, when Howard changed a name, the name he finally adopted was one whose origin was more obvious than that of the original name. It is as if he sometimes made up a name; but — having something of a tin ear for languages — he became dissatisfied with it and substituted a name from real history, mythology, or geography, either in its original form or slightly modified. I think you will agree that his changes were usually improvements.

ER:

Ghurran (=Tauran) — Prob. from Ghurian, Afghanistan.

Sarpedon (=Tuscelan)- A Lycian prince in the Iliad, slain at Troy by Patroklos.

Swamp Snake (=Zogar Sag) — An obviously invented name.

Thog (=Jheebal Sag) — Prob. invented; previously used in SS.

Varanna (=Velitrium) — Prob. from the same source as VALANNUS (q.v.).

Venara (=Venarium, q.v.)

BC:

Gath (=Aphaka) — A town in western Judaea in biblical times.

Khoraspa (=Khoraja, q.v.)

Nilas (=Styx) — The Nemedian name for the river; from Nilus, Neilos, or Nile, also mentioned as "Nilus" in "The Hyborian Age".

Stygus (=Styx, q.v.) — The Kothian name for the same river.

Vathathas — A legendary king of thieves. Poss. from the same source as VATHELOS (q.v.). DIs

Xag — The name of the Yetshi fisherman, prob. invented.

DT:

Dongola — a Negro tribe mentioned in the synopsis but not in the unfinished rough draft. From a town & province of that name in the Sudan, on the Nile. The inhabitants are the Dongolavi.

GB:

Amerus (=Posthumus) — From the same source as AMALRIC (q.v.).

Kalanthes (=Caranthes) — **Kalanthes** was Howard's form. In editing the story in 1951, I changed it to **Caranthes** because I thought **Kalanthes** too much like **Kallian** (q.v.), the name of another character in the

same story. My derivation of **Caranthes** in **The Conan Reader** is evidently wrong, for when I compiled the original "Exegesis" I had forgotten about this change.

HD:

Amilio (=Tieerias) — From the same source as **Amilius** (q.v.).

Ghorbal — A place whereof a Nemedian at the execution of Albiona is lord. Prob. from the same sources as **Ghor** and **Khorbul** (q.v.).

Karnath — A Stygian city. Poss. from Lovecraft's "Sarnath" (in "The Doom that Came to Samath"), the name of a real city in India, near Banaras.

Khor — A valley In Aquilonia. Prob from the same sources as **Ghor** and **Khorbul** (q.v.).

Sabina (=Zenobia) — The feminine form of Sabinus, a common Roman cognomen, which in turn comes from Sabini, a people of central Italy who received Roman citizenship in -III.

Sathus (=Set) — From the same source as SATHA (q.v.).

Skuthus — A necromancer. Orig. uncert.

JG:

Ahrunga, Korunga (=Gwarunga) — Orig. uncert.

PC:

Khahabhul (=Khorbul, q.v.)

QC:

Tameris (=Bêlit) — From the same source as **Taramis** (q.v.).

RN:

Toragis — The place near which Conan's ship was sunk. Poss. from the same source as **Tortage** (q.v.).

Valadelad — A town burned by Conan just before the abovementioned sinking. From Valladolid, Spain.

SZ:

Baal, Bel (=Baal-Pteor, q.v.).

Zuagros — Conan's destination at the end of the story. From the same source as **Zuagir** (q.v.), plus the Zagros Mts. of western Iran.

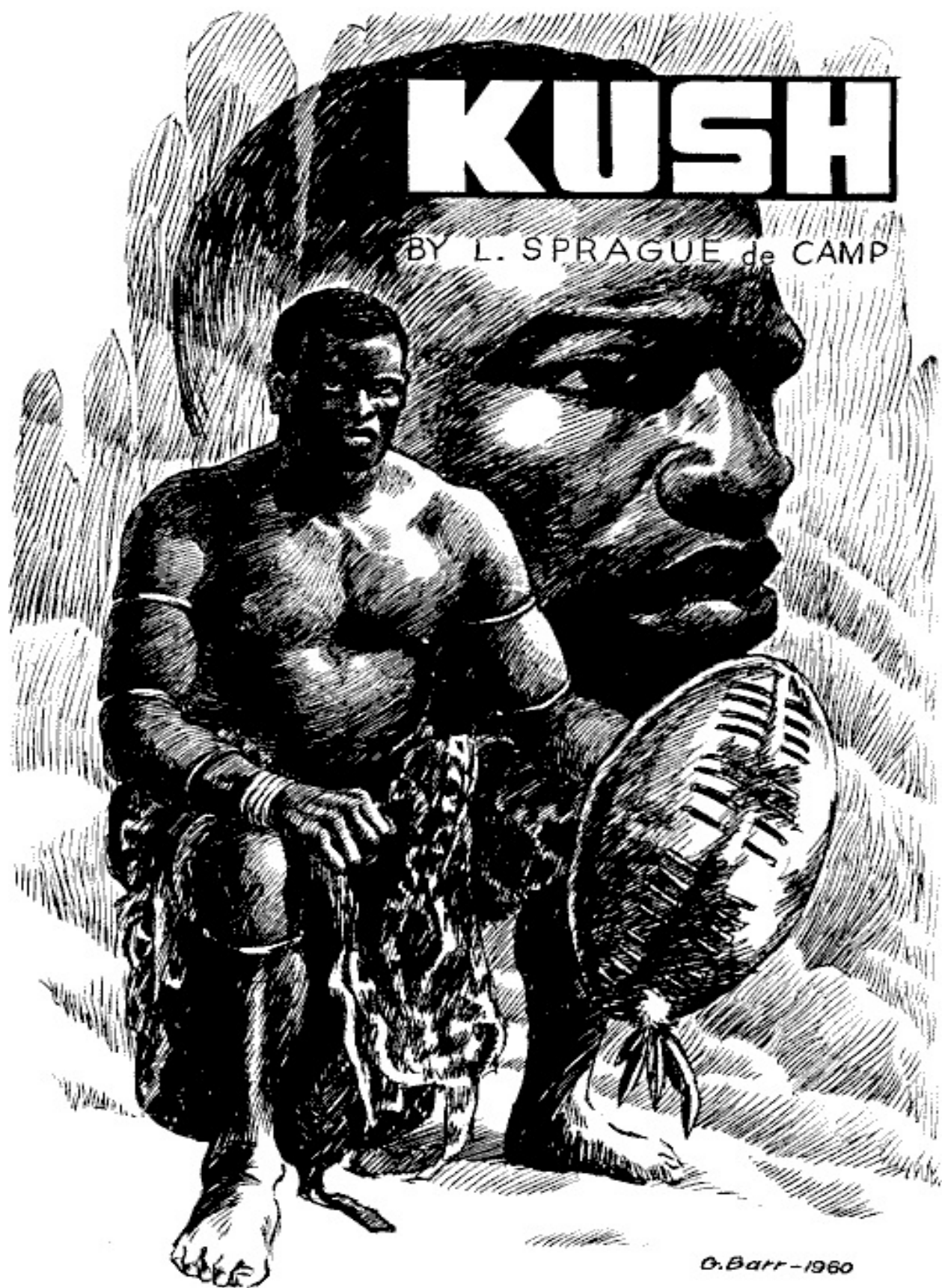
IT:

Sebro (=Gebellez, q.v.) — Orig. uncert.

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KUSH

BY L. SPRAGUE de CAMP



The map of Conan's world shows, on the coast south of Stygia, the kingdom of Kush (which Howard, following the King James Bible, sometimes spells Cush). In his letter to Miller ("The Coming of Conan", p. 10) Howard explained:

Concerning Kush, however, it is one of the black kingdoms south of Stygia, the northern-most, in fact, and has given its name to the whole southern Coast. Thus, when an Hyborian speaks of Kush, he is generally speaking of not the kingdom itself, one of many such kingdoms, but of the Black Coast in general. And he is likely to speak of any black man as a Kushite, whether he happens to be a Keshani, Darfari, Puntan, or Kushite proper. This is natural, since the Kushites were the first black men with whom the Hyborians came in contact — Barachan pirates trafficking with and raiding them.

The historical kingdom whereon Howard based his Kush occupied most of what is now the Sudanese Republic for 1,100 years. Though not progressive, Kush was not altogether deficient in the arts of peace and war. In fact, the kings of Kush once conquered Egypt itself.

The region has been known by a variety of names. First come a series of names applied to all of Africa south of the Sahara, as far as this immense area was anciently known. To the Egyptians it was Ta-Kenset Nehesu, "The Land of the Blacks". The Greeks knew it as Ethiopia, "Land of the Burnt-Faces". When the Arabs came, they called this country Balad es-Sudân, also meaning "Land of the Blacks" (from *'aswad*, "black").

Although black-skinned folk are often touchy about references to their hue, two modern nations have adopted names referring to this racial feature. The Sudanese Republic is one; the Kingdom of Ethiopia is the other. The people of the highland region now called Abyssinia or Ethiopia encountered the name "Ethiopia" when they were Christianized in the fourth century AD. Greek translations of the Bible use the Greek "Ethiopia" to translate the Hebrew "Kush". When the Bible was translated from Greek into Ge'ez, "Ethiopia" came out as "Iteyopeyá". When the highlanders acquired national self-consciousness, they adopted this name. Today the indigenous name of the kingdom is "Iteyopeyá, albeit the form Ethiopia" is designated as official in languages using the Latin alphabet.

The Sudan embraces a diversity of races and tongues. The bulk of the people belong to a type called "Hamitic" — but inaccurately, as this is

properly a linguistic term. Physically they are rather slight. Their features approximate the Caucasoid rather than the Negroid type, and their hair is curly rather than kinky; but their skins are of Negroid *oscurità*.

Most of the people now called Ethiopians are of the same type. It used to be thought that these folk were of mixed Caucasoid-Negroid ancestry, but modern genetics makes it seem more likely that they evolved independently, occupying a position between the Caucasoid and Negroid races from the time they were first differentiated.

In the southeastern Sudan occur people of the Forest Negro type — large and muscular, with broad noses and thick lips. In the south, on the upper Nile, live men of another Negroid type, the Nilotics: extremely tall, lean blacks characterized by devotion to their cattle, complete nudity, and largely monosyllabic languages — the Shilluk, Dinka, and Nuer.

The peoples of the central and northern Sudan fall into three main groups. Between the Nile and the Red Sea, the people are nomads, tending towards the Arabian racial type. The ancient Egyptians called them the Anti or “Hill-men”. The Greeks and Romans called them Blemmyes (Coptic or Late Egyptian: Balnemmówwi or Balehmówwi) and described them as headless men with faces in their chests. They are the Bega of the medieval Arabs and the modern Bisharîn.

West of the Nile live nomads of similar habits, but tending more towards the Negroid type. The ancient Egyptians called them Mentiu or “Cattle-men”; the Greeks and Romans, Nobatae; we call them Baqqara. South of the Baqqara live the more sedentary and Negroid Nuba. The terms “Nubia” and “Nubae” have been applied to the northernmost part of the Sudan and its folk. The exact relationship among the names Nuba, Nobatae, Nubae, and Nubia is doubtful, as the modern Nuba do not live in modern Nubia, but more than 600 miles south of it.

Mixed and immigrant groups are scattered about the country; for instance, a number of Arab and mixed Arab-Sudani tribes. Arabs have been drifting over from Arabia for more than 2,000 years and probably brought, in the camel in Achaemenid times.

Between the Bisharîn and the Baqqara, in the Nile valley proper, live the Dongolavi of Dongola, of similar racial type but noted as sharp traders. The predecessors of the Dongolavi founded the kingdom of Kush.

The Sudan is mostly a flat dry country, pure desert in the north shading to swamp, steppe, and savannah in the south. Though it is poor in resources and

scanty in population, its people are notably warlike. At Omdurman in 1898, the Mahdist army of “Fuzzy Wuzzies” charged screaming against Kitchener’s Maxims and did not stop until half their men were dead or wounded and the plain was carpeted with black, white-clad bodies.

The Dynastic Egyptians, who raided and intermittently ruled the land, called the Sudan “abominable Kash” (or Kashi, Kesh, Echosh, etc.) whence the Hebrew Kush. The north (modern Nubia) was sometimes called Wawat, while the eastern part, bordering the Red Sea, was called Punt. Ophir lay south of Punt on the Red Sea coast; the Ophireans’ modern offspring are the Afara or Danakil of Eritrea.

After the Kushites had long been exploited and enslaved by the far more advanced and powerful Egyptians, a Kushite monarchy arose about 800 BC. Egypt was in a disintegrated, feudal state, with rival kings at Tanis, Thebes, Sals, and Bubastis, the last of Libyan origin.

The Kushite kingdom became strong under Kashta. His successor, Plankhi, conquered Upper Egypt, while the next kings, Shabaka and Shabataka, extended their rule over the entire land. They constitute the 25th Dynasty of Egypt.

The next Kushite king, Taharqa, became embroiled with the Assyrians, who in a series of bloody campaigns drove him and his successor Tanutaman south into Kush. The breakup of the Assyrian Empire enabled the Saite kings to extend their rule over all of Egypt.

The Kushite kings continued to reign from their capital at Kept, Nepita, or (later) Napata on the Nile, near modern Marawi. We know but little of their reigns, save for a few inscriptions.

For instance, there seems to have been a struggle over the old custom, practiced till modern times in Abyssinia, of eating raw meat cut from a living cow. The priests of Amun, of Egyptian origin, found this a horrid usage and tried to stamp it out. The ruling class of Kushites imitated Egyptian customs, importing Egyptian scribes to design monuments with inscriptions in Egyptian.

The king wore an outfit like that of Egyptian kings, with an embroidered linen kilt and an elaborate headdress bedight with golden hawks, cobras, and so forth. In addition, the king’s cheeks were marked with the zigzag tribal scars used in the Sudan to modern times. The queens wore a long and gaudily decorated skirt but usually went bare above the waist. From the sculptures, they seem to have been enormously fat around the middle. Probably they

were deliberately fattened, as the upper-class Negroes of Uganda fattened their womenfolk in the nineteenth century. This proved them to be gentlefolk, as the women obviously could not work.

When the Persian king Kambujia (Cambyses) conquered Egypt, he sent an army to Kush, but this army perished. Later the Persian kings counted “Ethiopians” (Kushites) among their troops and listed Kushia as one of their provinces.

But the line of the kings of Kush continued. It is not known whether the Persians ruled all of Kush, with the kings of Kush as tributaries, or whether the Persians ruled the north absolutely while the Kushite kings maintained their independence in the south. The latter seems to me more likely, as about this time the Kushites moved their capital from Napata to Barua, or (Greek) Meroë, up the Nile almost to modern Khartum. Thoth only knows how Napata later came to be called “Marawi”, a probable derivative of Meroe, when the original Meroë is 160 miles away in a straight line and twice as far around the great bend of the Nile.

From Meroë the Kushite kings ruled for many centuries. One, Arqamen or Ergamenes, went to Ptolemaic Alexandria for his education about 210 BC. The priests of Amun were so powerful that, when they thought the king had reigned long enough, they told him that the gods willed that he die. So the king obligingly killed himself, as some Nilotic kings did in modern times.

However, Arqamen came back from Alexandria full of skeptical Greek philosophy. When he got the word, instead of killing himself, he gathered a squad of soldiers, went to the shrine, and slew all the priests.

Along with other Egyptian customs and beliefs, the Kushite dynasty took over the custom of pyramid building. At Napata and Meroë, they left about seventy royal pyramids and scores of smaller ones for their royal relatives. The Kushite pyramids were only about a third or a quarter as tall as the big pyramids of Egypt, but they made an impressive set of monuments. Some still stand, though many have been demolished by later Sudanîns for building stones. Pyramid building continued to the close of the Kushite dynasty around 350 AD — 2,000 years after the custom had ended in Egypt.

The Romans had a few brushes with the Kushites. Each time, a Kushite queen-mother seems to have been regent for a minor son. Thence arose the legend that the Kushites were ruled by queens only. The Kushite word for queen was *katake* or *kantake*. Hence the Greek *Kandakê* and Roman allusions to “Queen Candace”, and hence the modern use of “Candace” as a girl’s

name, (I believe it is favored by, of all people, the U.S. southern whites!)

In the fourth century, the Kushite kingdom fell to a new power, the Axumite kingdom. Adventurers from Arabia had set up a kingdom at the town called Auxoumis by the Greeks and Axum by the Romans — modern Aksum — in the northern Abyssinian highlands. This was the first historical dynasty to rule part of the land now called Ethiopia. The modern Ethiopian has an imposing pseudo-history going back to King Solomon and the Flood, but this is not to be taken seriously.

Later, two Christian kingdoms ruled Kush: Aiwa, with its capital at Soba, near Khartum, in the southeast, and Dongola in the northwest. These held out against the advancing Muslims until the fourteenth century.

Then they were incorporated in Islam. Since then, the country has been gradually Arabicized in language, religion, custom, dress, and genes.

El Ron and the City of Brass

by L. Sprague de Camp

On nights 566 to 578, Shahrazad entertained her sultan with the tale of the City of Brass. She told how a certain Caliph sent an expedition under the Emir Musa to explore deep into Africa. She narrated how they found a vast, deserted castle, a jinn imprisoned in a pillar, and finally the City of Brass itself, with all its people lying dead in the streets and houses.

The expedition gathered a load of loose treasure, met a friendly black tribe, and at last returned in triumph to the Caliph. There is much sentimental Arabic poetry about the shortness of life, which causes hearers to weep or swoon. There are quaint historical gaffes about the events of the Days of Ignorance (that is, before Muhammad). Thus we read of “Darius the Greek, King of Alexandria”, and we learn that Alexander the Great once conquered Morocco. On the whole, however, the tale is not one of Shahrazad’s best. Perhaps the stories of Sindbad, just preceeding, had drained her faculties.

Anyway, the City of Brass became the springboard for the first of a series of fantasy novels in the great, lamented *Unknown* by science fiction’s sauciest scapegrace, Lafayette Ronald Hubbard — writer, entertainer, adventurer, and cultist. In the four and a half years of *Unknown*’s life, L Ron Hubbard furnished eight fantasy novels to this magazine, one as “René Lafayette”. Of these eight, three can surely be classed as heroic fantasy. A fourth, “Typewriter in the Sky”, does not quite make it.

The three novels are “The Ultimate Adventure”, “Slaves of Sleep”, and “The Case of the Friendly Corpse”. All have much in common. Each has an anti-hero: a weak, shy, timid, prissy, pedantic youth forced to become a roistering, swaggering adventurer. In each case, the protagonist starts as a contemporary American and is tossed into another “dimension” or plane of existence. In each tale, the other world is vaguely Islamic. In each yarn it is indicated that the speech is Arabic; but Hubbard, characteristically, failed to learn anything about that severely logical tongue. As a result, many of the names of the denizens of these worlds are, Arabically speaking, impossible.

In “The Ultimate Adventure (I, 2, Apr 39), Stephen Jepson, left a destitute orphan by the death of his aunt, is beguiled by a mad professor into a foray in one of an infinite number of universes, which coexist with ours.

Stevie is placed in an electric chair with a copy of the **Arabian Nights**, open to the “City of Brass”, before him. The professor closes the switch, and Stevie finds himself in the City of Brass itself. Exploring a tower, he unwittingly sounds a huge gong; whereupon, the people of the city, lying apparently dead, awaken. (Gladney goofed in his cover painting by showing a bell instead of a gong.)

After a close escape from a gigantic ifrit or jinn, Stevie returns to the laboratory but is unwillingly sent back to the City of Brass, this time with a pistol in his pocket. He is condemned to death as a suspected ghoul, shoots his way out (not quite fair, that), falls in with ghouls who collect people’s heads to eat, rescues the rightful queen of the City from captivity in an ifrit’s castle, and turns the tables on the professor when the latter comes seeking treasure. It’s all good fun.

“Slaves of Sleep” (I, 5, Jul 39) is perhaps the best of the three. It is the only one, as far as I know, that has appeared in book form (Chicago: Shasta Pubs., 1948, with a charming jacket by the late Hannes Bok; NY: Lancer Books ((73–573)), 1967? cover illo by Frank K Freas). It shows more sustained power of imagination than its predecessor.

This time the protagonist is a poor little rich boy, better heeled than Stevie but no more effective. Jan Palmer, heir to a shipping fortune, ignores the business and moons about in a sailboat while crooked executives loot the shipping line. Among his heirlooms is a large copper jar, sealed with the seal of Solomon. Another professor (Hubbard seems to have had it in for professors) sneaks into Jan’s house and opens the jar, which disgorges one of the ifrits imprisoned by Solomon. True to form, the ifrit kills the professor, curses Jan with eternal sleeplessness, and vanishes, leaving Jan to be accused of the professor’s murder.

The first time he goes to sleep in Jail, Jan learns what the ifrit meant. Instead of ordinary dreams, he finds himself in a parallel world where people form the lower caste and jann, the upper. The locale is otherwise much like the Barbary Coast of the Mediterranean in the seventeenth century. Jan inhabits the body of a sailor called “Tiger”, a roisterer with a bent for practical jokes. Thenceforth Jan alternately awaits his trial in jail on the earth he knew and has madcap adventures in the alternate one. In time, the characters of Jan and Tiger merge, to the great improvement of both.

It also transpires that other people he knew in his waking life — his aunt, the crooked executives, and the girl he timidly worships from afar — also

have Doppelgänger in the world of sleep. With the help of a magical ring that opens all bonds, Jan triumphs over his ill-wishers. This ring is the main flaw in the story, because it makes Jan's triumphs look childishly easy. For instance, he defeats a hostile navy by simply commanding it to fall apart.

"The Case of the Friendly Corpse" (V, 2, Aug 41) has some of the most original ideas and the funniest passages of any of these three tales, but it also lets the reader down the hardest at the end. Its originality is explained by the fact that a lot of the ideas were not Hubbard's. In the 1930s, Dr John D Clark (who edited Howard's Conan stories for the original cloth-bound publication) and a friend named Mark Baldwin concocted a prospectus for an imaginary College of the Unholy Names. In a clever imitation of the usual deadly-dull style of such publications, they solemnly listed courses in the various black arts. Delinquent students (e.g., those found guilty of sleeping alone) were to be dropped — from Skelos Tower. In 1941, Clark lent the only typescript of this fabrication to Hubbard, who used it as a basis for his tale. The typescript was then lost.

In the story, Jules Riley is about to get an advanced degree and become an instructor in ancient languages — a fate that Hubbard deemed worse than death — when he falls into another dimension. He learns that his *alter ego* Achmed el Abd Mahmud, a student at the College of the Unholy Names, has used his magic to swap bodies with Jules.

Fletcher Pratt and I had just finished our pre-war Harold Shea stories; "The Castle of Iron" had appeared in *Unknown* two issues earlier. Hubbard played a mean little joke on us by having Harold appear before one of Jules's fellow students.

"He said he was a magician from another world," explains the student, who has been demonstrating a wand that turns into a super-serpent. "Well, I was just about to show the dean this double wand so I said this would be a good time to try it out and see if it really worked. I said I'd make a snake and then he could rear up a monster and we'd see which one won. Well, he seemed kind of upset when I threw down the wand and it began to grow and he yelled some kind of chant that sounded like mathematics and the snake just kept on growing. I expected to see his monster any minute because he'd said he was a magician from another world and I figured he must be pretty good. But, by golly, the snake just grew up and then grabbed him and ate him up before I could do anything about it."

Some fans were indignant at Hubbard's so brusquely bumping off a

fellow author's hero. Pratt and I thought of writing a story to rescue Harold from the serpent's maw, but after some floundering we gave it up. Another writer's *mise en scène*, we found, cramps the imagination so severely that one's fantasy plods when it should soar. In the end, we ignored Hubbard and sent Harold on to other milieux.

The title of "The Case of the Friendly Corpse" comes from the incident wherein Jules is forced to bring a dead man back to life. However, he gets the revivication spell mixed up with one for winning friends and influencing people. Hence the corpse is only half restored but is filled with love for Jules, to the latter's horror.

It's a good, lively tale until the climax. Jules, stripped of his magical powers and facing the vengeful host of his fellow sorcerers, overcomes them by simply renouncing magic and opting for the Christian God. Then his sword cuts through them and their monsters as through warm butter. To top it off, King Arthur's knights, not mentioned before, gallop out of nowhere to chase the paynims away. This ending is as incongruous as would the finale of **For Whom the Bell Tolls** stuck on a novel by P G Wodehouse. Moreover, while some writers like T H White and C S Lewis can handle the Christian bit, since they really believe in that creed, the cynical Hubbard, when he tries it, merely embarrasses and irks the reader.

The Hubbard story in *Unknown* that almost makes it as s&s is the two-part serial "Typewriter in the Sky", beginning in the issue of IV,3 (Nov 40). Mike de Wolf, aspirant pianist, is visiting the flat of his friend Horace Hackett, hack writer, who is pounding out a yarn of piracy on the Spanish Main in the year 1640. Mike gets an accidental electric shock in the bathroom and finds himself living in Hackett's story. Moreover, he is cast as the villain of that novel, the Spanish admiral Miguel de Lobo. Knowing the dooms that Hackett metes out to his villains, Mike-Miguel employs frantic stratagems to outwit Hackett, who is, as it were, the god of this world.

It's all good fun, but the story cannot be taken seriously enough for heroic fantasy. The synthetic world of Hackett's imagination contains no magic; only the careless anachronisms and inconsistencies — such as a Steinway piano — that Hackett puts into his story. When Hackett tears up a chapter and begins it over, Mike's situation instantaneously changes to match. Since the tinsel artificiality of the scene created by Hackett's mind is a basic assumption of "Typewriter", the reader is amused but not strongly engaged.

Finally, about the middle of 1950, Hubbard wrote a sequel to "Slaves of

Sleep". This was "The Masters of Sleep", which appeared in *Fantastic Adventures*, issue of XII, 10 (Oct 30). Something goes awry, with the result that Jan Palmer loses his double consciousness, reverting to his timid self in the waking world and to the foolishly reckless Tiger in the world of sleep. The same fate befalls his mate, who is the ex-secretary Alice in the former world and the dancing girl Wanna in the latter.

Again, a marvelous talisman, the Two-World Diamond, appears to muddle and eventually solve Jan-Tiger's problems. Throughout the story, the diamond is constantly being lost, found, stolen, and re-stolen. There are fine scenes of naval action of the square-rigged, muzzle-loading, pike-and-cutlass era.

Alas for the story, Hubbard had just launched his cult of Dianetics upon an unsuspecting world, by means of an article, "Dianetics, the Evolution of a Science", in the May, 1950, *Astounding*. Hence "The Masters of Sleep" undertook not only to entertain the reader but also to plug Hubbard's cult.

Moreover, Hubbard, who had earlier prided himself of being utterly apolitical, had at last discovered the menace of Communism. Hence the waking world has two main villains. One is a mad psychiatrist, Dr Dyhard. The name implies that he is one of the few who have refused to adopt Dianetics. Instead, he believes in prefrontal lobotomy for everyone and plots to get control of Jan for that purpose. The other is a thieving lumberjack named Chan Davies, a member of the Friends of Russia Communist International Objectors Social Hall Lumberjacks Local No. 261, with designs on the magical diamond. It is not a coincidence that a left-wing science-fictioneer called "Chan" (for Chandler) Davis was then in the news. Hubbard also worked in propaganda for the Al-Can Highway.

This admixture of political and pseudo-scientific evangelism proved disastrous to the story. Hubbard's caricatures of psychiatrists and Communists are so crude and silly that, even if his premises were granted, his treatment would not move any but the weakest and most immature minds in the direction desired by the author.

So ended Hubbard's contributions to the genre of heroic fantasy. He might have contributed much to the present revival of the genre, had he not abandoned fiction to follow in the footsteps of Count Cagliostro, Mme Blavatsky, and Dr Albert Abrams.

Hubbard had many of Howard's gifts: a natural bent for story-telling, a fine sense of pace, color, and action, and (far more than Howard) an ebullient

sense of humor. One must admit that, whatever their faults, few stories can furnish more pure fun than El-Ron's. He also suffered from Howard's besetting faults of slapdash haste and carelessness, which clutter his stories with damaging crudities and inconsistencies like those committed by his writing character, Horace Hackett. If he had taken a little more time and trouble. . . . But then, if he had, he would have been, not Hubbard, but somebody else with different virtues and faults.

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Conan of the Khyber Rifles

by Chuck Hansen & Norman Metcalf

In reading over Robert E. Howard's **The People of the Black Circle***, one is struck by the similarities between this story and some of the stories by Talbot Mundy. In **An Exegesis of Howard's Hyborian Tales** de Camp acknowledges Howard's debt to Mundy. To find the sources from which Howard derived many of the names used in the Conan mythos, de Camp has gone back to ultimate sources; what we wish to suggest is that the immediate and intermediate source for many of Howard's names was the stories of Mundy. (**Weird Tales*, Sep. & Nov. 1934 "The Sword of Conan", Gnome, 1952)

In addition to using Mundy as a source of names, Howard seems to have, in **The People of the Black Circle**, echoes of the mood and even some of the incidents of Mundy's work. In short, Howard was inspired by Mundy, just as many of our presently active authors are inspired by Howard's stories.

For an example: On page 5 of **People. . . .**, Bhunda Chand says,

"Aid me! I am far from my mortal house! Wizards have drawn my soul through wind-blown darkness. They seek to sap the silver cord that binds me to my dying body." In Chapter XII of Mundy's "The Nine Unknown" (1923) we find: ' "I am dead, but the silver cord is not yet cut," said the corpse.' This may well be a common imagery in the Orient, but its use here suggests Mundy was Howard's source.

The seven captive Afghulis on page 16 of **People. . . .** are apparently modeled after the prisoners from the hills in Chapter IV of "King of the Khyber Rifles" (1916). Both groups are used as bargaining points between the people of the plains and those of the hills.

The method used to murder the guard on page 19 of **People. . . .** is modeled after the one used by the priests of Kali in "The Nine Unknown" (Chapter VIII and subsequent). "Khemsas flicked the spear aside with his left hand, as a man might flick a straw, and his right flashed out and back, seemingly gently to caress the warrior's neck in passing. And the guard pitched on his face without a sound, his head lolling on a broken neck." (**PC**, page 19) "There was a motion of the handkerchief, as quick as lightning but less visible, and Diomed fell unpicturesquely — dead — a heap of something

in a soiled check shirt and crumpled collar — so dead that not a muscle twitched or sigh escaped him.” (“The Nine Unknown”, Chapter VII) While the methods differ slightly as far as can be told from the descriptions the end result is certainly the same.

Howard’s mysterious means of transport used on page 21, 43, and elsewhere might have a faint tie-in with Mundy’s “Jimgrim” (1930–31) wherein Dorje has an air ship built from plans found in an Atlantean city in the Gobi, for the Gobi Desert is in the approximate area of eastern Hyrkania and any Atlantean city might well have survived there through Hyborean times to our own. Thus Yimsha’s carpet and Khemsa’s horse of air might have been discovered in the Hyrkanian wastelands. Who is to say when the Atlantean city was finally abandoned, or whether or not the adepts of the Black Circle used their arts to discover these long-forgotten secrets?

Yasmina’s imprisonment in **PC** (page 27) is modeled after that of Joan Angela in “The Hundred Days” (1922). The description of the physical aspects of the two huts, including the use of stolen construction materials, the woman preparing food, the argument over the two prisoners, the beds of sheepskin, etc., follow each rather closely, even to setting both on the Northwest Frontier. And the part of Mundy’s Kangra Khan is played by Howard’s Yar Afzal.

The four men in black who kill Khemsa (**PC**, page 45) are strongly reminiscent of the dugpas in “The Devil’s Guard” (1926). Furthermore, the vein of gold leading to the citadel on Mount Yimsha reminds one of the vein of quartz that formed the only means of access to the flank of the ravine from the ruined building in Chapter XXI of “The Devil’s Guard”.

In “King of the Khyber Rifles” Mundy has a jihad raised above the Khyber to conquer India. In **PC** Howard says, “It is said that a great army is being raised to sweep the hills about the Zhaibar. The tribes are whetting their knives and laying ambushes in every pass from here to Gurashah Valley.” (page 30)

Although the style and plotting of the two authors are quite different we can see that Howard did borrow from Mundy many specific incidents. As de Camp points out, the description of the Zhaibar closely follows that of the Khyber. Furthermore, the mood of **The People of the Black Circle** follows that of some of Mundy’s work. Yet, as Howard sought background from other authors he enlarged upon what he borrowed with his combination of sorcery and swordplay now no longer unique as Howard’s admirers have in

turn borrowed from him.

Amra vol. 2 no. 14 1961

A Man Named John

by John Pocsik

Probably the most outworn cliché of macabre fiction today is that of the psychic detective, the so-called “spook-hunter” of John Silence fame. So many trite and stereotyped stories have been written about them in past years that they have become an almost obsolete fixture and many times serve as an object of ridicule and scorn in various plays and satires.

Algernon Blackwood was the first to use the psychic detective when he created John Silence. Some of these stories are good and some are not; it all depends on the reader’s individual likes or dislikes. Fans of Robert E. Howard might enjoy Silence as a series-character, but they might also dislike both the vagueness of Blackwood’s style and the lack of really two-fisted action.

Down through the twenties and thirties, many stories of this type were written, but most of these are not worth the mentioning unless one might consider Howard’s Solomon Kane as a hunter of demons. During this period, the psychic detective story evolved into the more modern and hence more interesting forms; less emphasis was given to the “hypersensitivity” of men towards psychical phenomena and more action and daring were added as is evidenced by the Jules de Grandin stories of Seabury Quinn.

With the dawn of the forties, the psychic detective (with changes) enjoyed a brief glow of fame in the hands of two skilled writers. The first was August Derleth, who created an altogether different type of psychic detective in the characters of Andrew Phelan and Professor Laban Shrewsbury. Derleth wrote five connected novelletes about these two men, who ally themselves with Hastur the unspeakable to combat the menace of Cthulhu; these five stories comprise the contents of the Arkham House book, **The Trail of Cthulhu**.

The second writer, with whom we are most concerned, is Manly Wade Wellman. In 1943 he created a series of stories about a man named John Thunstone. Wellman pictured Thunstone in a manner remarkably similar to Howard: John is a big, massive man, broad of chest and well muscled; his face is a determined one, his eyes grey above his neatly trimmed moustache. He is an independently wealthy man, highly cultured, who lives in sumptuous

ease: one might call him the Mr Lucky of fantasy. His sole purpose in life seems to be the destruction of evil magic and to this end he has become a learned scholar of spells and counterspells of the occult arts. Many times, however, has he had to use his fists and his brawn to carry out his designs. Romantically, he is interested in blonde Sharon Hill, the Countess Montesco, but it is doubtful if they ever get married. Wellman also tells us that Thunstone himself admits that he is not psychic; therefore he is not a psychic detective in the sense of Blackwood's John Silence.

Fifteen stories about John Thunstone were published in *Weird Tales*. I shall give short summaries of each in the following paragraphs.

"The Third Cry to Legba" (Nov 1943) introduces Thunstone to the reading public. Dining with Sharon Hill at a somewhat disreputable nightclub which features an authentic voodoo sacrifice to the Haitian god, Legba, every night at midnight, Thunstone meets a self-styled wizard named Rowley Thorne. Thorne knows that, if the sacrifice to Legba is offered a certain number of times, the god himself — more accurately, itself — will come to wreak havoc upon the world and demand worship. Thorne plans to be the world-wide ruler of a cult. During the climax of the last fateful act, Thunstone manages to defeat the hideous Legba, though nearly losing his life in the process. Thorne is left in the embarrassing position of owing ten thousand dollars (which he hasn't got) to the nightclub. In this tale also there is mention of a St Dunstan (probably Thunstone's patron saint) who once "tweaked the nose of Satan himself with hot irons."

"The Golden Goblins" (Jan 1944) tells the story of a Tsichah Indian named Long Spear. A man named Barton Siddons is trying to procure a "sacred bundle" of Long Spear's in order to destroy it and thus disgrace the Indian. Long Spear, a cultured gentleman, leaves the bundle with Thunstone for safekeeping. Siddons clobbers Thunstone, ties him up, and then proceeds to open the forbidden bundle. Before Thunstone's eyes, Siddons is killed horribly by a group of tiny, golden goblins; then Thunstone is freed by these same creatures before they return to their bundle. Mention is made of the miserable Thorne washing dishes to pay off his debt.

"Hoofs" (March 1944) again deals with the ambitious Thorne. This time he has imprisoned the soul of Sharon Hill's dead husband in a miniature glass horse; he plans to give the dead Count a new home in the body of one of his henchmen. Unfortunately, Thunstone again botches up his plans, giving Thorne a good beating in the process and freeing the imprisoned Count.

“Letters of Cold Fire” (May 1944) tells how Thorne (spry as ever) kills a graduate of the Deep School (a school in another dimension where the most malefic sorcery is taught) to obtain his “Book” which contains letters visible only in the dark. With the information contained in it, Thorne almost succeeds in killing Thunstone; fortunately our hero remembers a counter-spell. Thunstone trails Thorne to his hideout and there tells him: “[The Deep School is] held in a cellar below a cellar. Someday I’ll find it and put an end to the curriculum.” Thorne, by incantation, sends Thunstone into the horrible dimension of the Deep School and prepares to leave him there; however, Thunstone has other ideas. He tackles Thorne and destroys the “Book” thus returning himself and Thorne to our normal world. [One suspects transfer credits are allowed between the Deep School and The College of Unholy Names.] At the end of the story, Thorne is committed to an insane asylum, Sharon Hill tells Thunstone she was praying with the cross of St Dunstan, that he gave her for protection in “Legba”, for him. “That,” says Thunstone, “was why I was in no danger.”

“John Thunstone’s Inheritance” (July 1944) tells of Sabine Loel, a beautiful medium, whom Thunstone has often shown up. Thunstone is left a certain house which is reputed to be haunted. He decides to investigate and takes Loel with him (to warn him of anything psychic which he himself cannot feel). He learns that the house is indeed haunted — by a Thing which guards gold buried in the cellar. Unfortunately Sabine Loel learns of the hidden gold, clobbers Thunstone (who seems to have a pretty hard head) with a poker, and descends to the cellar. Thunstone awakes just in time to rescue her from the demon (there is a terrific fight). Next day he cements up the cellar, leaving the gold behind. Sabine Loel is left feeling very woebegone.

“Sorcery from Thule” (Sept 1944) tells of the rivalry of two Eskimo magicians: Ipsu (the good) and Kumak (the bad). Thunstone has a passive role in this tale, but still almost gets himself killed by Kumak before Ipsu intervenes.

“The Dead Man’s Hand” (Nov 1944) is the story which introduces a race called the Shonokins, magicians who claim to have ruled America long before any Indian was was here. They are tall men, have catlike eyes with diamond-shaped pupils, and ring fingers which are longer than their middle fingers. They fear nothing except their own dead, of whom they are mortally terrified. Ward Conely and his daughter take over their newly acquired farm. They are approached by a Shonokin who demands that they pledge

themselves to the Shonokins and in return they will reap material benefits. Meanwhile, Thunstone, hot on the trail, draws near. The Conelys refuse and at night are visited by the Shonokin who has a “hand of Glory” which paralyzes them. Just as they are about to be killed, Thunstone seizes the Glory hand and the freed Conely blasts the Shonokin almost in two with his old trusty shotgun. Thunstone buries the body on the farm to protect the two Conelys and departs; when he arrives home he learns that Thorne has escaped from the asylum. Wellman tells me that, although he thought he had just made up the Shonokins, many people wrote to him with comments that the Shonokins were real.

“Thorne on the Threshold” (Jan 1945) tells of Thorne’s escape from the asylum. He vows revenge upon Thunstone and to this end begins a cult. He now has the power to shift his body into another plane of dimension with the aid of numerous named demons of Hell; he can grow to giant size during this change. Thunstone (who I might add has been about the only person to read the NECRONOMICON without getting killed) finds Thorne and manages to defeat him. Thorne’s body and soul are, in the process of the struggle, hurled across the Threshold into Hell. That is the last of Rowley Thorne.

“The Shonokins” (March 1945) meanwhile are clamoring for Thunstone’s blood too, as Sabine Loel warns him. This is a tale of spells and counter-spells as the Shonokins place a trap in Thunstone’s own apartment. Thunstone overcomes them, killing another of their number in the process. He places the dead Shonokin’s body on his inherited farm (remember?) for adequate protection.

“Blood from a Stone” (May 1945) tells of another Shonokin attempt upon his life. Thunstone uses counter-spells and tobacco smoke to defeat an illness sent upon him (Long Spear, by the way, gave him herbs to mix with his tobacco to fight evil magic). He also manages to escape a magic jewel of the Shonokins which has the inconvenient habit of growing to bushel-basket size and leaping at his head.

“The Dai Sword” (July 1945) gives our hero a rest from the Shonokins. In this epic, he uses his sword-cane (of course, it’s the sword of St Dunstan) to defeat a mysterious man with a sword that, when drawn from its sheath, must always “drink blood”. It gets quite bloody towards the end.

“Twice Cursed” (March 1946) is a long novelette in which Thunstone makes good his threat to destroy the Deep School. This accursed place is in a rat-infested cellar beneath a book store in New York; however, it is in another

dimension, that is to say the cellar is merely the focal point. Thunstone, with the aid of two friends, descends into this accursed land and destroys it utterly by killing its Master Scholar. He then burns the cellar itself and thus the Deep School is no more.

“Shonokin Town” (July 1946) is perhaps the best of all the Thunstone stories. He manages to discover the location of a Shonokin settlement in the Zoar Valley and he sets out to destroy it. He really takes his share of Shonokins in this one: he strangles one, breaks the back of another, and then releases a molten flood upon the rest of the settlement. One notices that Wellman implies that Thunstone has met both Jules de Grandin and the legendary H.P. Lovecraft himself. He also finds out why the Shonokins fear their own dead: there are no females or young among them; therefore, when one dies, no new Shonokins can take his place.

“The Leonardo Rondache” (March 1948) tells of a painting of a hideous monster by da Vinci which a sorcerer has imbued with unearthly life. Again Thunstone uses his sword to defeat the monstrosity. In this tale, there are references to both Rowley Thorne and the Shonokins.

“The Last Grave of Lil Warren” (May 1951) is the last story of Thunstone that Wellman has written. Thunstone discovered the presence of a vampire turned werewolf in the remote hills of New York. After a good fight with a backwoodsman, Thunstone kills the vampire-wolf with a sword through her heart. Thus we must bid farewell to the adventures of John Thunstone.

Wellman wrote of John Thunstone with a vividness which is seldom attainable by writers. Perhaps one day he will consider writing more of him.

Response

by E. Hoffman Price

Primitive peoples do respond precisely as Sprague says. In Mindanao, in the warlike times of Datu Ali, and other noted Moro fighting princes, ferocious characters who used the *kris* and *kamgilan* and *barong* in combat with rifle- and pistol-armed US soldiers, firearms were greatly desired by the natives. These skirmishes continued until at least 1914. I cite the Moro because we who soldiered in the Islands in 1917 were quite close to those events, chronologically speaking. We were pleased that the proximity was chronological, instead of geographical. It was well known in those days that Moros armed with their versions of the sword were among the most dangerous opponents the United States regular soldier had ever encountered. Stealth, masterly jungle craft, courage, and fighting heart and pure ferocity levelled the odds far more than could be imagined by any except the gun-armed troops who survived. In the end, fire-arms did prevail. But in his own jungles, the Moro came closer to doing the impossible than has any other fighting man on record.

Despite all this testimony to valor and skill, there is this fact which sustains de Camp: the Moro grabbed whatever *lantakas* he could liberate. A *lantaka* is a small, archaic, muzzle-loading Spanish cannon, with barrel three feet long at the most; bore, an inch or two; a light piece, with little bronze grips near the touch-hole. These handles were to facilitate moving the gun from one position to another, and no doubt for depressing or elevating it. Lacking *lantakas* of bronze, the Moro would improvise by using tubes of bamboo, wrapped with rattan strands, in the same way that metal cannon were sometimes reinforced with iron wire. Lacking metallic projectiles, the Moro used scrap iron, junk, or balls of stone. Masters of the sword, and with a phenomenal record of killing rifle-armed soldiers, the Moro nonetheless craved the most modern weapons, not as a prestige, but simply because he wished to level the odds against him.

In his conquest of India, Zahiruddin — better known as Babur, First of the Moguls — gave the hard fighting Rajput warrior his first taste of artillery fire, and also, I think, of musketry.

It is well known too that the mountaineers of India's Northwest Frontier

had a burning passion for fire-arms. Using the most primitive of lathes, the resourceful Pathan would make replicas of the rifles he stole from the British. Hand-powered lathe, hand-operated drill, and lots of filing — anything to get guns faster than even those master thieves could steal them!

It has been offered, “One possibility Sprague hadn’t considered is that of an advanced culture decaying, so that there are a few marvellous machines about, but only a very few; most people get to wave swords from speedy thoats and have fun.” No doubt Sprague skipped this one because his entire presentation is based on historical fact. I do not know of any highly mechanized, atomsplitting, electronically-actuated civilization which has so decayed that almost everyone is reduced to using axes, swords, or archaic machine guns and automatic pistols for the day’s bit of homicide. Some of our generation, or a couple of generations after us, may have plenty of factual data as basis for an interesting commentary. For the day at hand, we can only speculate.

There are occult traditions to the effect that the Atlanteans had gone further in mechanization than we have, when their warlike and predatory civilization blew up in somewhat the way that some of our sombre prophets of today suggest that our civilization is racing to the atomization point. And, Atlantis about that time got some upheavals of nature, just to make a thorough job of exterminating a race that had outlived its cosmic utility. It is said that Plato gives a few hints on this. Whether those bits are intended to be literal or symbolic is up to those mind-readers who can see through Plato. The last of the Atlantean continent and the remains of its civilization got the kiss of death some 15,000 years ago, tradition says.

Sir Charles Darwin, in a study of population explosion, calculates backward from today, and without any reference to Plato, suggests that about 15,000 years ago, the Earth’s population was, relatively speaking, just a corporal’s guard. Having established a plausible rate of increase, he projects a century or two into our future, and predicts standing room only, and then cannibalism.

Trusting to failing memory, and without any reference works at hand, I am no doubt taking improper liberties with Sir Charles’ statements; and I may also be warping the expression, Theosophical and otherwise, of the Atlantean tradition. However, I submit this as a reasonably plausible warping. And I suggest that toward the close of Atlantean splendour, with darkness and doom closing in, and Nature become more destructive than Man, there

could have been a phase wherein a few only, of the once innumerable machines, remained. After that, the day's killing sometimes had to be done with clubs, or with bows and arrows based on memories of museum specimens, or with various chemical hand-guns, or with swords and maces. Or with whatever the frustrated fighting man could cook up, rather than forego his daily homicide. And over all this reversion to jungle ways, a few atomic-fission machines swooped and soared, to beat Nature to the punch. And men with axes and swords and cunning and stealth and ferocious valor might catch a space cruiser at mooring, and sneak aboard, and massacre the crew, and after grounding or blowing up the great machine — blowing it up, since they wouldn't know how to use it, or maintain it — the sword-armed warriors would hew out for themselves a fine new world. Then someone would invent what millenia later was known in India as *panj*, that is *five*, because it contained five ingredients, to wit: milk, rosewater, arrack, sugar, opium, hasheesh. Just about then, someone would remember that there were some surviving women —

And here comes Conan —

Gentlemen, you can project this phase into our future; or you can look back to Atlantean days. It would take some very very skillful doing; and I abstain from making any nomination. Still, I say that it could be done, by one who could at once see both the forest and the trees, and not ignore too many of the leaves.

A Furthest Note on the Red Planet

by E. Hoffman Price

In *Amra* v2 #37, you discuss the likelihood that ERB derived some of his Martian and other non-terrestrial scenes from Theosophical literature, specifically, writings of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. Since I do not at the moment have *Amra* at hand, I can not be certain, but my best recollection is that the Blavatsky books are not specifically named. [They are not.] Would it be convenient for your contributor to give the titles?

In 1928, in pursuit of my then hobby, the collecting of Oriental rugs, I met Barsoom Badigian, who used to sit in Salim Hesni's Syrian café in the Vieux Carré of New Orleans — and, once every hour he would flip out a \$50 bill and pick up the check for all present. Believe it or not, he always got quite a bit of change, for in that far off age, many a cup of coffee, and many a slug of *raki*, and much good Syrian cookery, could be bought for fifty bucks. Thus began a beautiful friendship, the history of which is not relevant to *Amra*'s pursuits. I therefore skip the years and get on to the early months of 1941, when again in New Orleans, I learned that the wandering Armenian was also again in my favorite city. He was then probably 65 years old, possibly 66–67, and at his peak of wit and sparkle. After stuffing ourselves with mutton stewed with leeks, we left the Greek café, and headed for my studio with a bottle of Haig & Haig, or equivalent.

There were ballads in Turkish, and in Persian, neither of which I understood, but all selections had a lilt which required no intellectual comprehension. There were yarns and memoirs and anecdotes. There was a bland evasion of one pointed query regarding the lack of lustre of certain “commercial” Persian rugs.

There was also a considerable frankness on that subject, unusual all the more because he was still actively engaged in the rug business. I give all these circumstantial bits to suggest to you the impression I got then: buddies meeting for the first time in ten years, and having fun, enjoying good fellowship; neither seeking to sell the other anything. In this framework, I got the following:

“I knew Edgar Rice Burroughs, way back, years ago. My name, Barsoom, caught his fancy, and he wondered if I'd object if he used it in one of his

stories. So I think he called something or someone BARSOOM.”

Just like that. And we poured more Scotch, and forgot that casual, unimportant bit in re: “Barsoom”, and went on, getting at important things, such as the lowered caliber of Syrian cuisine since Salim Hesni’s place had folded.

I could give an account of a meeting 13 years later; the final one, although Barsoom Badigian lived another seven years after that last session. To do so would achieve only what I believe has already been done — that is, establish the man as one not likely to cook up a flimsy yarn concerning the origin of a locale-name in a book. He might well declare a rug worth \$5,000 when \$1,500 would be plenty. But that is something else. Finally, ERB and his writing meant nothing at all to old man Badigian, except insofar as ERB himself was an agreeable associate. Whether a Martian name was derived from Urdu or Old Icelandic would have been a matter of total indifference.

Anyway — there you have it, as I remember it from early 1941.

[Insofar as the strict rules of evidence go, Badigian’s tale does nothing to support Lupoff’s theory, for, as Lupoff himself pointed out, a single coincidence can be dismissed as pure accident, with no particular significance — but oh, what a splendid coincidence! And if we were you, we’d be awfully careful about what we said whilst standing on any of Ed Price’s rugs. . . .]

Robert E. Howard Letters

R.E.H. Letter to Harold Preece

“Robert E. Howard wrote the following letter to Harold Preece; judging from the allusions to “The Voice of El-Lil” (*Oriental Stories*, Oct-Nov, 1930) and “Kings of the Night” (*Weird Tales*, Nov 1930) about the end of 1930. Racial migrations and mixtures in prehistoric Europe were a popular subject of speculation at the time Howard wrote this letter, before the excesses of Hitler’s government made race almost a tabued subject in intellectual circles.

“Modern anthropologists would criticise Howard on two grounds: One, that he ascribes greater importance, racial distinctness, and persistence to the tribal entities denoted by such names as “Pict”, “Saxon”, etc than they really merit; two, that he is probably wrong in assuming, as many such speculators did, that the original Aryans, who, as a result of being the first men to tame the horse, set out on a great career of expansion and conquest that carried the Indo-European languages from Portugal to Bengal, were the same as the Nordic types of Scandinavia and northern Germany and Holland. On linguistic grounds, the point of dispersion of the Aryans has been pretty reliably located in Poland.

“Now, present evidence is that the basic gene-pool in any part of Europe has stayed much the same since the beginning of history, because the conquerors were always so small in numbers, compared with the peasant masses they conquered, that they lost any distinctive racial type by dilution in a few generations. So the Aryans were probably much like the modern Poles, who are predominantly of the Alpine type, albeit with some Nordic admixture.

“This leads to the appalling thought that the original noble Aryan was probably a guy who looked like Nikita Khrushchov — the perfect Alpine!

LSdeC”

Well, Harold, I’m sorry to hear your nose is troubling you again. I hope it will get alright. My own nose is nothing to brag about, having been broken several times. Man is a frail and very imperfect piece of nature.

I’m glad you liked “The Voice of El-Lil”. Of the stories you mentioned, I don’t believe I’ve ever read that tale of Kipling’s, “The Finest Story in the World”, but London’s “The Star Rover” is a book that I’ve read and re-read

for years, and that generally goes to my head like wine.

Have you read my latest story in *Weird Tales*? I believe you'll like it; it deals with Rome's efforts to subjugate the wild people of Caledonia. The characters and action are fictitious but the period and the general trend of events are historical. The Romans, as you know, never succeeded in extending her boundaries very far into the heather and after several unsuccessful campaigns, retreated south of the great wall. Their defeat must have been accomplished by some such united effort as I have here portrayed — a temporary alliance between Gaelic, Cymric, aboriginal and possibly Teutonic elements. I have a pretty definite idea that a slow filtration of Germanic settlers had begun in eastern Caledonia long before the general overflow that swamped the Latinized countries.

Some day I'm going to try to write a novel length tale dealing with that misty age: allowing myself the latitude that a historical novelist is supposed to be allowed, I intend to take a plot something like this: dealing with the slow crumbling of Roman influence in Britain and the encroachment of Teutonic wanderers from the East. These, landing on the eastern coast of Caledonia, press slowly westward, until they come in violent conflict with the older Gaelic settlements on the west. Across the ruins of the ancient pre-Aryan Pictish kingdom, long pinned between implacable foes, these war-like tribes come to death-grips, only to turn on a common foe, the conquering Saxons. I intend the tale shall be of nations and kings rather than individuals. Doubtless I shall never write it.

As regards the pre-Aryan communities I mentioned in "The Voice of El-Lil", as you know all western Europe was once inhabited by small, dark, garlic eating tribes of Neolithic culture, known variously as Mediterraneans, Iberians, Basques, Long-heads, Garlic-eaters, and in Britain, Silures or Picts. Traces of these people, conquered and subjugated by the Aryan Celts, show still in the races today in the British Isles, and these primitive peoples I mentioned are undoubtedly vestiges of the race — whence doubtless come the legends of Phoenecian settlements in Cornwall and Ireland. New races of Nordic Celts or Teutons coming into the Isles, seeing these small dark men concluded that they were of Semitic blood, or Egyptians. The fact is, they preceded all other races into the west, possibly excepting a very primitive Mongoloid prototype which was soon extinct.

This Mediterranean type underlies all races and only a few centuries is required for this people to change the physiognomy of their conquerors. Who,

for instance, not knowing their real origin, would realize that the first Aryan ancestors of the Italian, the Greek, the Persian and the high-caste Hindu were light eyed blonds, almost identical with the present day Scandinavian?

But to return to the Mediterraneans of the Isles, where these tribes remained a race apart longer than anywhere else. These aborigines are popularly known as Picts, and by this name I have designated them in all my stories — and I have written a number in which I mentioned or referred to them — “The Lost Race”, “The Shadow Kingdom”, “The Mirrors of Tuzun Thune”, “The Dark Man”, “Kings of the Night”, to say nothing of several which I have not marketed.

Doubtless this term is in strictest sense, incorrect. I doubt very much if those ancient folk had any term that designated them as a people; Tuatha Feda, roughly, forest people, was the name given them by the Gaels of Ireland.

Bede says the Picts came to Scotland from Scythia after the Gaels had arrived in Ireland. The Gaels drove them into Scotland, rather, would not let them settle in Ireland, and later came over and dispossessed them. It is readily seen that these people were not aborigines, since the Gaels came into Ireland as late as the first century A. D.

But here arises a question: did these “Scythic” people take the name of an older race among whom they settled, or did they lend those older peoples their name?

It is no doubt but that the “Picts of Galloway” were of a very mixed race, with Celtic no doubt predominating. But when I speak of the Picts proper, I am referring to the older, pure-blooded pre-Aryan type.

I think the following theory to be fairly logical: that Caledonia was inhabited from the earliest times by a dark Mediterranean people; that the conquest of the Romans drove numbers of Cymric Britons into the heather, whence, no doubt, comes the tales of the “Caledonians”, large, fair haired people who fought with war-chariots. No doubt these tribes mixed a great deal with the natives.

Then, in the press of Roman conquest, which no doubt caused displacements of many Celtic tribes, doubtless including the Gaels, who must have come into Ireland from the mountains of Spain or Southern Gaul, another wave of Celts came into Caledonia, that race known as Picts. They may have been of Gaelic, Belgic or Brythonic type, though all evidence points to a non-Gaelic language. Or they may have been a type of Celt

unclassified. Very likely it was already a mixed race, with Latin, Teutonic or even Semitic elements. This race, settling in Caledonia, possibly conquered the natives and gave its name to them.

You understand I have little or no foundation for this theory and am merely putting it forth as a supposition.

The natives of Galloway were spoken of as “the Picts of Galloway” long after the coming of the Saxons. Doubtless a strong strain of Mediterranean blood coursed in their veins, but they were a very mixed breed — besides the Pictish blood mentioned, they had strong elements of Gaelic, Brythonic, Danish and Saxon. More especially as Galloway, as the name implies (Gael-Gall, meaning a province under the control of the Gall, or foreigners) was early conquered by the Angle kings and did not regain its independence for a long time. The name Pict came to mean merely a native of Galloway. But behind that local term loomed a great shadowy realm reaching back into the Stone Age. Therefore, the term Pict as I use it, refers to that old, old Neolithic race in its purity and completeness.

According to Scotch legends, which speak of the Picts with the utmost horror and aversion, the Pictish kingdom was destroyed and its subjects wiped out by Kenith MacAlpine. Doubtless the kingdom was destroyed but it is likely that the people were absorbed by the surrounding Gaelic tribes. And this kingdom was the mixed one of which I have already spoken. The old pure Mediterranean type had largely disappeared. Distance lends perspective but it also distorts and foreshortens. Doubtless the legends of the Picts became mixed with the older, darker legends of the ancient Mongoloids of the Continent. These tales form the base of the Aryan folk lore — as regards dwarfs, elves, gnomes, kobolds, demons, and the like — and twining themselves about the myths of the Picts, lent them a supernatural accent — demoniac appearance, subhuman stature, and so on. No doubt the later Picts were of more stocky build and unprepossessing appearance than the purer blooded Gaels, but I cannot believe that they were as hideous in aspect as the legends make them out.

R.E.H. Letter to August Derleth

Robert E. Howard corresponded with August Derleth for several years. Derleth, a careful man, saved the letters he received and later turned them over to the Wisconsin State Historical Society, from whom microfilm copies were obtained by our Obtaining Editor, Glenn Lord. The letters ranged over many subjects: the changing seasons, poetry, stories, by the two authors, Texas gun fighters, death . . . and a fort, beyond a river, wiped out in an Indian raid. . . .

Dear Mr Derleth:

I was much interested in your accounts of the history of your native state, and of the Indians inhabiting it. The Sacs seem to have been a well developed race, superior in culture to most of the aborigines of the Southwest; though these latter had few masters in the arts of war and rapine.

The Indians of Texas were: the Ceniz, who lived in the vicinity of the Neches and the Trinity Rivers, and were first encountered by La Salle in 1686 — they soon became extinct; the Adaes, who lived near what is now San Augustine, and who disappeared about 1820; the Carankaways, who lived adjacent to Galveston Bay — a ferocious, cannibalistic race, akin to the Caribs, they were destroyed in a great battle with the Spaniards in 1744; the Jaranamas, Tamiquez, and Anaquas, small clans living on the lower reaches of the San Antonio River; the Couthattis, a branch of the Muskogees, living in the lower valley of the Trinity — they were broken in the battle of Medina; the Alabamas, who lived along the Neches; the Seminoles, who came to Texas with the Cherokees — others later migrated from Florida, and took up their abode near the Border; the Tonkaways, who lived along the Brazos whence they spread to the Guadalupe — they were destroyed on their reservation by the Comanches in 1864; the Lipans, who were a strong and important tribe, in and about Bandera County, until dealt a terrific defeat by Bigfoot Wallace and his rangers, after which the survivors migrated to Mexico; the Apaches, who need no advertisement — I doubt their assumed kinship with the Lipans; the Carrizos, who were of the Pueblo stock, living along the Rio Grande — they were absorbed by the Mexicans; the Tiguas, Pueblos, living near what is now El Paso; the Caddos, who lived mainly in

the eastern part of the state — they included the Keechies, Ionies, Wacos, Nacogdoches, Ayish, Tawakana, Towash, Wichitas, Cachatas, Tejas, and Anadarkos; the Kickapoos, who were driven westward by the white drift — many crossed into Mexico; the Cherokees, who emigrated to Texas between 1822 and 1829, were broken in the war of 1839 and moved to reservations in Oklahoma, later; the Delawares, immigrants from the eastern states, and friendly to the white men; the Comanches, the strongest tribe in Texas, and the lords of the western plains — a more ferocious race never trod this continent.

Authorities class the Comanches as members of the Shoshonean race, which also includes the Shoshones, Utes, and Pawnees. But I wouldn't have cared to tell an old-time Comanche that he was of the same blood as the Utes; a knife in the guts would have been the probable retort. Their legends made them blood-kin with the Apaches, whom ethnologists name Athabascans, along with the Navajoes. Yet the Comanches and Apaches seem to have had many points in common, though much intermarrying might explain that. At any rate the Comanches were the most skillfull horse-thieves on the continent, not even excepting the white rustlers that worked between El Paso and New Orleans back in the '70's.

It would take a large volume to tell the full story of Quanah Parker, and of Cynthia Anne Parker, yes, and of Peta Nocona, the last war-chief of the Comanches. It is the classic tale of the Southwest, which has been rewritten scores of times, fictionalized and dramatized. I will tell it as briefly as possible.

In the year of 1883 a band of settlers, about thirty-four in number, headed by John Parker, came from Illinois and formed a colony on the Navasota River, in Limestone County, Texas — then, of course, part of Mexico. In 1836, when the Texans were fighting for their freedom, the Comanches were particularly bold in raiding the scattered settlements, and it was in one of those raids that Fort Parker fell. Seven hundred Comanches and Kiowas literally wiped it off the earth, with most of its inhabitants. A handful escaped, through the heartshaking valor of Falkenberry and his son Evan, both of whom fell a year afterward on the shores of the Trinity in a battle so savage and bloody that the Comanches who survived it retold it as long as they lived. But there Fort Parker passed into oblivion, and among the women and children taken captive were Cynthia Anne Parker, nine years old, and her brother John, a child of six.

They were not held by the same clans. John came to manhood as an Indian, but he never forgot his white blood. The sight of a young Mexican girl, Donna Juanity Espinosa, in captivity among the red men, awakened the slumbering heritage of his blood. He escaped from the tribe carrying her with him, and they were married. He took up his life again with the people of his own race, joined General Bee's command, fought with characteristic valor through the Civil War, and afterwards became a well-to-do Texas ranchman.

For Cynthia Anne a different fate was reserved. In 1840 a group of traders found her on the Canadian River with Pahauka's Comanches. They tried to ransom her, but the Indians refused; and then she was seen no more by white men until about 1851. Meanwhile she had grown to womanhood; there were various suitors for her hand, among them Eckitoacup, of whom more later. He was a shrewd fellow, more given to intrigue than to war. But Cynthia Anne became the mate of Peta Nocona, whose fame hung gloriously at his scalp-belt, and whose diplomacy was the stroke of a tomahawk. She bore him children, among them a son, Quanah, which means something similar to sweet fragrance. When white men next came into the Comanche camp where Cynthia Anne dwelt, they strove to persuade her to accompany them back to her white relatives. She refused; she had almost forgotten that other life, as she had forgotten her native tongue. Then, in 1860, her Indian life was ended, bloodily, violently, just as her white man's life had ended.

Peta Nocona, apparently kind to her in his way, and possessing all the finer qualities of the red man, was, nevertheless, an unbridled devil along the frontier. His trail was a red one, and many a settler's cabin went up in flames, and many a frontiersman went into the long dark scalpless because of him. When retribution came, it was merciless. On the Pease River his Nemesis overtook him, in the shape of Sul Ross, later governor of the State, and his Rangers. The surprise favored the white men. They were among the tipis shooting and slashing before the Comanches realized what was occurring. They broke and scattered, every man for himself.

Peta Nocona caught up his daughter, a girl of fifteen, and rode away with her. Ross was in full pursuit, knowing his prey. The girl was riding behind her father, and Ross's first shot killed her, and glanced from the shield that hung on Peta Nocona's back. As she fell she pulled the red man off his horse, but he hit on his feet, cat-like, and drove an arrow into the body of Ross's horse. The wounded beast began plunging and Peta Nocona began winging his arrows at the rider in blinding speed. Undoubtedly the erratic motions of

the wounded horse caused him to miss his first few shafts, and Ross, firing desperately even while fighting for his seat, struck and shattered the Indian's elbow. Peta Nocona staggered and dropped his bow, and Ross, jerking the trembling horse to a standstill, took good aim and shot his enemy through the body; the Comanche stood as if dazed, then, as another bullet from Ross's pistol tore through his torso, he reeled to a tree near-by, and grasping it for support, began to chant his death-song. Ross approached him, and ordered him to surrender, but his only reply was a ferocious thrust of his lance, which Ross narrowly avoided. Ross shrugged his shoulders, and turned away, making a gesture to his Mexican servant. The crash of a shotgun marked the finish of the last great war-chief of the Comanches.

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Kelliheir had ridden down a squaw who was trying to escape on a pony with her papoose. His pistol was cocked and leveled when he saw that she was a white woman. And so Cynthia Anne Parker came again into the lands of her people. The rest is history too obvious to reiterate. She lived with her people, her brother, Colonel Parker, a member of the Legislature, but she was never happy, always mourning for her red mate and children, always seeking to escape back to that wilder life from which she had been brutally torn. In 1864 both she and her baby went into the long dark. And one might question, whether into the Christian Paradise, or the Indian's Happy Hunting Grounds.

It's a grim tale, a terrible, pathetic tale. It did not make for mercy on either side. The story of Quanah Parker is brighter, as the story of man must nearly always be less fraught with tragedy than that of woman. Quanah escaped that slaughter on the Pease River, a lad of about twelve years of age.

His life at first was bitter hard, for he lived only by his own skill and cunning; and it was this fierce training as well as his white blood, that made him superior in physique and craft to his red kinsmen. One doubts if he ever gave his white heritage any thought. Indeed, his portraits give no hint of any but Indian blood.

Doubtless his youth was much like that of all other young Comanches; he fished, hunted, stole horses, pillaged the frontiers of his white kinsmen, indulged in tribal warfares and the brutal "smoking horses" and tortured and took the scalps of his enemies when he could. When he came into young manhood he loved Weckeah, the daughter of old Yellow Bear. But she had another suitor — Tannap, son of that old Eckitoacup, who had rivalled Peta Nocona in his youth. Eckitoacup was crafty and far-sighted, a red-skinned

business man, really, and he was very wealthy. The Comanches measured their wealth by the number of their horses; Eckitoacup possessed no less than a hundred ponies. Quanah had exactly one horse. But he had an advantage no other Comanche possessed; he was half-white, and the greatgrandson of grim old John Parker who died in the smoking ruins of his fort among a red heap of Comanche corpses. Quanah went to his friends, wild young braves like himself, and they gave him their ponies. The significance of this can be easily under-rated. They were poor young braves; they owned only one horse apiece. When they gave their mounts to Quanah, it was as if they had freely tendered him their whole fortune, all their worldly goods and hope of future advancement. It was more; a Comanche's horse was more to him than his bank account is to the average man. His horse meant the difference between life and death. When he gave it up or lost it, there was only one way to get another, and that was to steal it. And to steal meant that first he must borrow, in the savage ritual of "smoking horses" and carry the terrible scars of a raw-hide whip on his back for the rest of his life. For he could not raid the remudas of the settlers or the rival tribes on foot.

So Quanah brought ten horses to Yellow Bear's wickiup — only to find that Eckitoacup had offered twenty horses to purchase his son a wife. There may be seen less a desire to pamper his worthless son than to avenge on Quanah the defeat he had met at the hands of the young brave's father. Weckeah was prepared for the bridal party.

But, as has been reiterated, Quanah was half a white man. None of the Indian fatalism was his. In his veins burned the hot blood of those unconquerable white-skinned wanderers who have never known any gods but their own desires. Twenty-one young braves listened to Quanah's words in amazement, and fell in with his desires. When night fell, shadowy figures stole to Weckeah's tipi. There was a low rustling of whispering, then she glided from the tent and became herself a shadow among the hurrying shadows. When dawn rose, a fierce yell went up from the camp on the Canadian. Quanah was gone, and with him Weckeah and twenty-one of the most stalwart young braves.

They rode southward, into the mountain country of West Texas. There, they pitched their camp and began raiding the ranches of the whites — a dangerous game, a breath-taking, touch-and-go game. But they prospered, and soon owned a great number of mounts. To the outlaw band came other discontented young braves, and the young men slipped back to the main tribe

to steal women for themselves. After perhaps a year, the clan had grown from a score-odd, to several hundred. A new tribe had come into existence; a new star flashed redly across the frontier; a new chief brandished his scalp-tufted lance and sent his war-whoop shivering across the river-lands.

Then came old Eckitoacup, thirsting for vengeance, with a horde of lean naked warriors, painted for war, their lances glimmering in the dust cloud their horses' hooves lifted along the horizon. It has been said that Eckitoacup was a business man. His lust for vengeance did not exceed his caution, his concern for his own painted hide. He found Quanah's clan ready and more than willing to join battle. And he backed down. There was a parley, the pipe of peace was smoked, and Eckitoacup's injured feelings were soothed with a gift of nineteen fine horses from Quanah's now enormous herds.

But though Quanah's red brothers were no match for him in force or craft, he could not forever compete on equal terms with his white kin. His continual raids on the horse-herds had the Texans fighting mad. And in those days, when Texans lost their temper, blood was spilled in appalling quantities. The soldiers stationed along the frontier were more or less useless, but the Rangers were riding, and the settlers were notching their sights on their own hook. The crack of the rifle answered the twang of the bow-string, the bowie knife dipped as deeply in red paint as the tomahawk; raid was met by fierce counter-raid, and the white men, who in early days had barely held their own in their tenacious grasp on the land, were moving like a juggernaut westward, crushing all in their path.

Quanah pulled up stakes and drifted back up the long trail to the Canadian River again. Of his desperate defensive wars and eventual and inevitable defeat, there is little point in telling. He came at last to live in a valley of the Wichita Mountains, in a two-storied frame house, "the White House of the Comanches", with thirty rooms and all the comforts of civilization. Of his thousands of acres of land, some two hundred and fifty were put into cultivation; his horses numbered a hundred, and of "whoa-haws" he had a thousand — nor is it recorded that his more needy kinsmen ever lacked for beef. He was one of the six chiefs in the parade at the inauguration of Theodore Roosevelt — the others were Little Plume, the Blackfoot; American Horse and Hollow Horn Bear, both Sioux; Geronimo, the Apache; and Buckskin Charlie, the Ute. He was a personal friend of Teddy's. He educated his children at Chilocco and at Carlisle. Among the Indians he wore moccasins and buckskins, among the whites he wore the most genteel

garments of civilization — so-called. When he died, I do not know, but in 1905 he was living in his big white man's house, in the Wichita valley, with his wives Weckeah, To-ah-nook, Too-pay, and Too-ni-ce. And many a swashbuckler of the middle ages has enjoyed a reputation for a dramatic career with less reason than Quanah Parker might boast.

The Parker family played an important part in the settlement and developing of Texas. Colonel Isaac Parker, in particular, Cynthia Anne's uncle, was prominent in the politics of the Republic, and later a Senator when the State carried out its folly of coming into the Union. Parker County, in which I was born, was named for him, in memory of the times he spent in that then wild country, searching for his kidnapped niece.

Nor is Quanah forgotten; the county-seat of Hardeman County is named for him.

Such cross-breeds between the whites and the Comanches were comparatively rare, owing to the savage feud which existed between the races until the eventual defeat of the latter. The lad who delivers my evening paper has a strong strain of Comanche blood in him, which shows itself in his broad head, and bony, faintly hawk-like features. But such cases are rare. Most of the Indian blood that mixed with the white strain in the Southwest was that of the Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, and Chickisaws and Osages. Of these the most dominant by far was the Cherokee, a race noways inferior to any on the continent, white, red, or brown. I have relatives in Oklahoma who possess Cherokee blood in plenty.

It was with the Mexicans, to whom they were in general superior, that the Comanches mixed mostly. Many tribes of them were completely absorbed by the Mexicans along the Border, while, through the continual capture of Mexican girls, many a Comanche chief could boast the blood of Old Spain — to say nothing of the various Yaqui and Aztec strains that are the heritage of the Mexican. A parallel condition is offered in the case of the Apaches; of whom, incidentally, their chief old Geronimo once stole a bunch of my grandfather's horses, and chased him away from the silver mine he was working; chased him with the aid of a mob of his turbanned warriors, of course, that being a job that took a goodly gang of men, whether red or white.

Well, I hope I haven't bored you too much by these lengthy accounts. Let me repeat my interest in the information you gave me concerning your State, and the Indians. I'd be interested in hearing more about the Sacs, Foxes, and Winnebagos, as well as the white frontiersmen.

I reckon you're having snow up your way by this time. The weather here has been unusually warm. I've been going, in my shirt-sleeves, and them rolled up, for weeks. Pleasant weather, but not so good on beef and pork. A little more of it, and the fruit trees will start budding, in which event the late blizzards will undoubtedly spoil the fruit crop, as is usual.

With best wishes.

Cordially,

REH.

Amra vol. 2 no. 30 1964

R.E.H. Letters to Clark Ashton Smith

In addition to his correspondence with H.P. Lovecraft and August Derleth, Robert E. Howard also corresponded with Clark Ashton Smith. Some of the letters — from 1933 and 1934 — were made available by Glenn Lord; here is one which, from internal evidence, was apparently written in the first half of 1934.

Dear Mr Smith:

I am sorry to hear you have been indisposed, and I hope you have fully recovered by this time.

I am glad you liked “The Valley of the Worm”. I thought Rankin’s illustration was very good, myself. I was glad to see your illustration of your really magnificent “Charnel God”. That story is really a tremendously powerful thing, sinister figures moving mysteriously against a black background of subtle horror. I don’t know when I’ve read anything I admired more. I look forward to “Malygris”, not only to the story itself, but your illustration also, and to “The Colossus of Ylourgne”. I’m glad Wright is having you illustrate your work, and hope he decides to let you do the work for “Gates of the Silver Key” which you could do admirably.

I read Lumley’s “Dweller” in the *Fantasy Fan* and liked it very much; it certainly reflects a depth of profound imagination seldom encountered. I hope the *Fan* will use more of his verse.

I note with interest your remark about the rattler’s intrusion; I imagine that was a startling and unpleasant experience. Snakes give me the creeps; it was only with the greatest repugnance that I could ever bring myself to handle even a dead snake. One of the most nauseating memories of my life is that of laying my hand on a live water moccasin as I climbed up a creek bank. I escaped being bitten only because it was as much a surprize to the snake as it was to me, though I doubt if his nervous system suffered as much as mine did. On another occasion I was about to step over a large rock when some instinct that I have never been able to explain caused me to change my mind suddenly and leap as far from it as I could, in almost a panic. I jumped, and cleared by some feet a big rattler coiled at the foot of the rock. If I’d stepped down, I’d have stepped full into his coils. Another time I almost put my foot

on an eight-rattle diamond back in the darkness. My foot was poised in the air, when the rustling of his scales as he tried to crawl, caused me to look down and discern a vague writhing shape on the road. It was fall weather and he was too sluggish to strike, but even so it was some minutes before my hair would lay down on my scalp again. But the worst scare I ever got from a snake was from a harmless chicken snake, when I was a kid. I saw a chicken with its foot apparently caught under an old discarded stove door, so I bent and lifted the door. The snake had it by the foot, and it instantly released the chicken and struck at my hand — missed it and its head bumped against my bare foot. It had no fangs, and was perfectly harmless, but it might as well have been a king cobra for the effect it had on my nerves. I've always wished somebody had been there to measure the exact distance that I ascended into the air without the aid of wings, for I am positive that I broke several records beyond repair. I also broke the snake's back, incidentally. Retiring into the house to soothe my jumping nerves, I started to mount the stair, and was confronted by a rat-snake in the act of digesting a mouse on the steps. By the time I had disposed of him, I was beginning to believe I was being haunted.

I remember in one of Kipling's yarns somebody haunted somebody else with a "sending" of cats. A sending of snakes would be more disgusting.

I read with very great interest your comments on the forces that play upon the earth. It may well be that human life is affected vastly more than we guess by electrons or emanations from the outside. After all, we know so little about the universe, even the wisest of us. I've often wondered if, in the legends and myths of the ancients that have come down to us through the ages, there does not exist a foundation of truth, twisted and distorted beyond recognition.

Suppose that at some immeasurably distant time a real civilization existed, whose builders were possessed of infinitely greater knowledge than ourselves. If some cataclysm of nature were to destroy that civilization, remnants of knowledge and stories of its greatness might well evolve into the fantastic fables that have descended to us. We know how distorted a fact can become, even when passed through the mouths of a generation of fairly well educated people; how much more, then, must truths be twisted into myths at the hands of savages and barbarians through the ages. Sometimes it seems to me that there might be a blind spot in our conception of history and pre-history — a whole undiscovered continent of facts, lying beyond our horizon; a vast, forgotten reservoir of knowledge, of which our modern sciences are

but seepings, trickles from the greater store. I do not, of course, even put this forward as a supposition, but merely as a thought.

Cordially,
REH

Amra vol. 2 no 36 1966

[**Letter postmarked 22 July 1933.** The Mr Smith is, of course, the late Clark Ashton Smith. The letters were obtained by Glenn Lord, the editor & publisher of *The Howard Collector*.]

Dear Mr Smith:

I can hardly find words to express the pleasure — I might even say ecstasy — with which I have read, and re-read, your magnificent “Ebony and Crystal”. Every line in it is a gem. I could dip into the pages and pick at random, anywhere in the book, images of clarity and depth unsurpassed. I haven’t the words to express what I feel, my vocabulary being disgustingly small. But so many of your images stir *feeling* of such unusual depth and intensity, and bring back half forgotten instincts and emotions with such crystal clearness.

For instance, the stanza containing the line:

“The pines are ebony”

A memory springs up with startling clearness of a starlit glade wherein I stood, years ago and hundreds of miles distant, a glade bordered with pine trees that rose like a solid wall of blackness. “Ebony”. I have never encountered a darkness like that of a pine-forest at midnight.

And again, “Winter Moonlight” and the line:

“Carven of steel or fretted stone”

It limns a picture of last winter when I was struck with the weird and somber imagery of a tall mesquite tree etched against a snowy land and the dimly gleaming steel of a cloudy winter sky.

But I could go on indefinitely. I will not seek to express my appreciation of “The Hashish-Eater”. I lack the words. I have read it many times already; I hope to read it many more times.

Thank you very much for the comments you made concerning my verse, and especially “The Song of a Mad Minstrel”. I feel indeed honored that you should consider it worthy to be included in the anthology you mentioned.

Thanks, too, for the kind things you said about Conan. I enjoy writing about him more than any character I have ever created. He almost seems to write himself. I find stories dealing with him roll out much easier than any others.

That is a fine story you have in the current *Weird Tales*. I mean “Ubbo Sathla”; short as it is, it has a really epochal sweep that is almost dizzying in the vistas it opens of awful and incredible antiquity. I look forward with keen anticipation to your future stories. And in the meantime, my sincerest congratulations on “Ebony and Crystal”, and thanks for the intriguing inscription on the leaf.

Cordially yours,
Robert E. Howard

[Postmarked 14 Dec 1933]

Dear Mr Smith:

Only the fact that I have been sick has prevented me from answering your interesting letter before now. The drawing is fascinating, subtly suggesting life alien to humanity. My wizard of “The Scarlet Citadel”, Tsotha-lanti, must have looked something like that. Do you wish me to return the sketch?

I enjoyed your “Demon in the Flower” very much and am sorry that *Astounding Stories* is closed to stories of the weird nature.

I also enjoyed your poem in the *Fantasy Fan* and have urged the editor to publish more of your poetry. I’m very glad that you are to illustrate your stories, and look forward both to reading the stories mentioned and seeing the illustrations. It is indeed a priceless gift to be both a fine writer and a fine illustrator.

I believe Lovecraft has mentioned William Lumley to me in his letters. Lumley must be a remarkably interesting man. I’m rather of the opinion myself that wide-spread myths and legends are based on some fact, though the fact may be distorted out of all recognition in the telling. While I don’t go so far as to believe that stories are inspired by actually existent spirits or powers (though I am rather opposed to denying anything) I have sometimes wondered if it were possible that unrecognized forces of the past or present — or even the future — work through the thoughts and actions of living men. This occurred to me when I was writing the first stories of the Conan series especially. I know that for months I had been absolutely barren of ideas,

completely unable to work up anything sellable. Then the man Conan seemed suddenly to grow up in my mind without much labor on my part and immediately a stream of stories flowed off my pen — or rather off my typewriter — almost without effort on my part. I did not seem to be creating, but rather relating events that had occurred. Episode crowded on episode so fast that I could scarcely keep up with them. For weeks I did nothing but write of the adventures of Conan. The character took complete possession of my mind and crowded out everything else in the way of story-writing. When I deliberately tried to write something else, I couldn't do it. I do not attempt to explain this by-esoteric or occult means, but the facts remain. I still write of Conan more powerfully and with more understanding than any of my other characters. But the time will probably come when I will suddenly find myself unable to write convincingly of him at all. That has happened in the past with nearly all my rather numerous characters; suddenly I would find myself out of contact with the conception, as if the man himself had been standing at my shoulder directing my efforts, and had suddenly turned and gone away, leaving me to search for another character.

Well, I didn't mean to engage in such a long discussion of my personal problems.

I received Lovecraft's story, and thank you for sending it to me. I haven't had time to read it yet, but I know it is a splendid yarn. All his stories are.

Returning to Lumley's views, I emphatically agree with you that scientific dogmatism is no more sensible than religious dogmatism. There seems to be a conviction among moderns that anything which seems to fall outside the narrow lines of their personal experiences is impossible. They are like color-blind men who deny the existence of colors because they are unable to detect them. Like you, I prefer an open mind. I do not think that I have such a grasp on cosmic truth that a thing is necessarily false because I fail to understand the reason of it; I am willing to believe that things very possibly may exist outside my limited range of comprehension.

Lumley's seven-headed goddess of hate sounds intensely intriguing. Why doesn't he fictionize her?

With best wishes.

Cordially,

REH.

P.S. Wright recently accepted another Conan yarn, "The Devil in Iron".

[Postmarked 20 Jan 1934]

Dear Mr Smith:

Thanks very much for the kind things you said about my recent yarns. Wright has three more Conan yarns yet unpublished: "Iron Shadows in the Moon", "The Queen of the Black Coast", and "Rogues in the House" which I hope you'll like. I'm at present working on another which I haven't yet titled.

And let me thank you for the magnificent drawing of the reptile-being. I have been staring at it in fascination for the past fifteen minutes. The suggestion of inhuman evil is caught so admirably, and the whole thing is so startlingly *real* that I find myself handling it gingerly, half expecting it to come to life and sink its pointed fangs in my hand. I shall certainly place it among my most treasured archives.

I envy you your knack of making the fantastic seem real. I particularly remember your remarkable "Return of the Sorcerer" in *Strange Tales*. That was no story for one with weak nerves. The horror you evoked was almost unbearable. I have read and written weird stuff for more years than I like to remember, and it takes a regular literary earthquake to touch my callous soul. But it is the honest truth that my hair stood up when I read that story. Poe never wrote anything that congealed my blood like that did. I wrote the editor to that effect.

Thanks for the copy of *Fantasy Fan*. I subscribed for a year; a dollar is little enough to pay for the privilege of reading stories by Lovecraft, Derleth, and yourself. I enjoyed very much your "Kingdom of the Worm". It is an awesome and magnificent and somber word picture you have drawn of the haunted land of Antchar.

I hope Crawford has good fortune with *Unusual Stories*. I let him have a yarn entitled "The Garden of Fear", dealing with one of my various conceptions of the Hyborian and post-Hyborian world. He seemed to like the story very well, and I intend to let him have some more on the same order if he can use them. I have an idea which I'd like to work out in a series of that nature.

Glad you made the *Astounding Story* market. I've sent them a yarn, but haven't heard from it. Afraid they won't take it, but I intend to keep trying. I've sold stuff to Street & Smith in the past (prize fight yarns for *Sport Stories*) but not recently.

I enjoyed your story in October *Weird Tales*, as always; haven't gotten

the November copy yet, but look forward to reading your “Holiness of Azedarac”.

Best wishes, and thanks again for the splendid drawing.

Cordially,

REH.

P.S. Your remark about the correspondent who maintains that reptile-men once existed interested me greatly; I’d like to hear more about it.

[No date]

Dear Mr Smith:

Thanks again for the drawing of the wizard. I’d feel highly honored if you were to make a drawing for the Conan stories. Glad you liked “Rogues in the House”. That was one of those yarns that seemed to write itself. I didn’t rewrite it even once. As I remember I only erased and changed one word in it, and then sent it in just as it was written. I had a splitting sick headache, too, when I wrote the first half, but that didn’t seem to affect my work any. I wish to thunder I could write with equal ease all the time. Ordinarily I revise even my Conan yarns once or twice, and the other stuff I hammer out by main strength.

I liked your story in the current *Weird Tales* very much indeed; it had that smooth beauty of narration and sense of remote antiquity that characterizes all your work; poetic prose in the finest sense. And the illustration was splendid. I hope Wright will let you do a lot of illustrating for *Weird Tales*, for other stories as well as your own. I’ll certainly be glad to see your Zothique series collected in book form.

I hope Lumley markets his story, “The Ones of Hate” which you mentioned, and look forward to reading his “The Dweller” in *Fantasy Fan*.

I agree with you that little is actually known about the sources of human motivation. I’ve wondered if, in a thousand years or [so], people wouldn’t regard present day psychologists as we regard the alchemists of the middle ages; some phases of their work, anyway. It certainly does seem that certain individuals occasionally get in contact with forces outside themselves; something like cog-wheels grinding away in their spirits, that suddenly, perhaps only momentarily, slip into the notches of gigantic, unseen cog-wheels of cosmic scope. Maybe that’s what is meant by getting “in tune with

the infinite". Sometimes it seems to me that the interlocking of unseen cog-wheels lifts a man on to heights he would have never attained by his own efforts. This would explain the fact that a mediocre man sometimes attains great success and fame; explain also the unexpected and unexplainable catastrophes that often startle mankind in the fall of a great one. Say some cosmic law causes these cog-wheels (I can think of no better name for it) to work together for a space, the wheels within perfectly matching the wheels without. Some man happens to [be] placed in a position where he is lifted by the turning of the wheels. Apparently by his own efforts, but really blindly, he mounts to dizzy heights; he is acclaimed and praised, dazzled by his own glory. Then the same cosmic law that locked the wheels, unlocks them, leaving him in the gap. Dazed, stunned, and helpless he comes down crashing in the ruins of his glory, and neither he nor anyone else ever understands why this man who seemed so invincible the day before, seemed so unable ultimately to avert final disaster. This is mere supposition, of course, and not even any attempt to put forward a theory. But I have seen, and have read of, so many mediocre men in high positions, and wondered how they ever got there; and there are so many cases where men who had reputations for greatness finally made the most stupid blunders, and acted in a manner so inconsistent with their former actions — well, it just set me to meditating.

I would have answered your letter before now, but for about a week I was unable to do any writing, and my work stacked up on me so I'm just now getting caught up with it. The night was rainy and there was a steel flag pole in the middle of the street. I rammed it head-on. The fellow on the seat with me went through the windshield and I went partly through it, being checked by the steering-wheel which was bent double on my breast bone. He got a bad gash on his head, and I got my jaw ripped open. A little lower and it would have been my jugular. But what kept me from writing for so long was the fact that my hands were cut up too. For a fellow who has always lived a quiet, peaceful, and really prosaic life, I've had my share of narrow shaves: horses running away with me and falling with me; one threw me and then jumped on me; one turned a complete somersault in mid-air and landed on her back which would have mashed me like a bed-bug if I hadn't been hurled over her head as she fell; went head-on through a bed-room window once; knife stuck into my leg behind the knee, once, a hair's breadth from that big artery that runs there; stepped right over a diamond-backed rattler in the dark; etc.

Best wishes, and I look forward to your future stories.
Cordially,
REH.

Cross Plains, Texas
July 23, 1935

Dear Mr Smith:

I'm ashamed of my long delay in answering your letter, but assure you it was from no lack of interest. Since writing you last a number of things have combined to interfere with my correspondence: a month I was forced to spend in East Texas, during time I did no writing of any kind; a journey to Santa Fé, New Mexico; and a number of shorter trips to various points in West Texas; and the necessity of catching up on my fiction work which accumulated during the time spent on these trips, all caused me to get away behind on my letter-writing.

But I have, as always, followed your work in *Weird Tales*. I very much enjoyed "The Dark Eidolon", "The Last Hieroglyph", "The Flower Women", and the splendid poem: "Dominion". I am not exaggerating when I say that I do not consider that I ever read a finer poem than that. I'd give my trigger-finger for the ability to make words flame and hum as you do.

I've been concentrating on adventure stuff recently, trying to break into that field permanently. I've made a start, with yarns published in *Action*, *Thrilling Adventures*, and *Top-Notch*; got a couple of cover designs in a row with *Top-Notch* and am toiling manfully to become a regular contributor. Sent a three-part serial to Wright yesterday: "Red Nails", which I devoutly hope he'll like.

A Conan yarn, and the grimmest, bloodiest, and most merciless story of the series so far.

Too much raw meat, maybe, but I merely portrayed what I honestly believe would be the reactions of certain types of people in the situations on which the plot of the story hung. It may sound fantastic to link the term "realism" with Conan; but as a matter of fact — his supernatural adventures aside — he is the most realistic character I ever evolved.

He is simply a combination of a number of men I have known, and I think that is why he seemed to step full-grown into my consciousness when I wrote

the first yarn of the series. Some mechanism in my subconsciousness took the dominant characteristics of various prize-fighters, gunmen, bootleggers, oil field bullies, gamblers, and honest workmen I had come in contact with, and combining them all, produced the amalgamation I call Conan the Cimmerian.

Lovecraft tells me you are doing some impressive work in carving, using dinosaur bone; I envy you your splendid variety of talents — artist, poet, author, and now sculptor.

With best wishes.

Cordially,

Robert E. Howard

Amra vol. 2 no. 39 1966

Scalded by Poul Anderson

INTRODUCTION TO A SERIES OF FILLERS BY POUL ANDERSON

From time to time, for one reason or another, I indulge in the unprofitable pursuit of poetry, some of which is simply translation, some of which in turn is from the Old Norse. George Scithers has suggested that AMRA could use a few such as fillers; after all, they are straight from the so-called Viking Age, and presumably Conan's fans are also interested in the saga heroes. But some preliminary discussion seems essential.

Most of this poetry was composed by professionals, the skalds, sometime between (roughly) 700 and 1200 AD. However, the skald was not a mere bard, but a warrior in his master's following — or, like Egil Skallagrimsson, an independent adventurer. Also, every cultivated man was expected to compose verse on occasion, even on the spur of the moment, so that some “skaldic” poetry is by kings or chieftains. Much of it was always pedestrian, and toward the end it became almost unintelligibly full of metaphors and allusions. But at its best, it is vigorous, fresh, even lyrical.

It was not sung, nor given with any musical accompaniment, but recited. Very little use was made of rhyme. Normally, lines were knitted together with alliteration, e.g. Sighvat's “Full of joy was the faring/ on fjords beyond the beaches,” etc. (For such purposes, all initial vowels were considered equivalent.) In translating, I have followed the originals as closely as possible, but of course departures from strict skaldic convention were often unavoidable if the English result was to read even moderately well. I believe my versions are close enough that the differences are only of interest to scholars; whether they have any hint of the aliveness of the originals, I am uncertain.

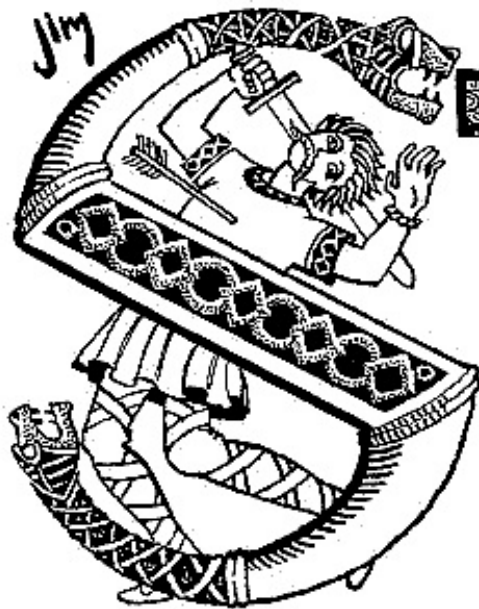
Much of the best poetry was composed during the reigns of those

Christian but Conan-like Norse kings, Olaf the Stout (later St Olaf, 995–1030) and Harald Hardrede (1015–1066). The latter was that seven-foot adventurer who climaxed and, in a way, ended the Viking era. At the age of fifteen, he fought on the side of his kinsman Olaf, who fell trying to regain the rule of Norway. Harald must needs flee to Russia, where he stayed with Grand Prince Jaroslav the Wise, fighting for him against Poles and nomadic raiders. Later he went to Constantinople, rose to head the Varangian Guard, and fought for the Byzantines all over the Mediterranean countries. Falling at last into disfavor, he made an escape back to Russia and married a daughter of Jaroslav. Thence he returned to Norway, where by Intrigue and bluff he compelled his nephew Magnus Olafsson to share the kingship with him. On Magnus' death in battle, Harald became sole ruler of Norway, and pursued his claim to Denmark in a long series of raids and battles. Though usually victorious, he could not enforce his will; after many years he made a peace conceding the right of his rival Svein Ulfsson to be King of Denmark. At some time during these years, Harald also led an exploratory fleet far up into Arctic waters. Despite such exploits, he was unpopular at home for his harsh rule, which earned him his nickname (actually, he seems to have been trying to establish an up-to-date centralized monarchy among his rather anarchistic people), and at loggerheads with Rome for defying Papal authority. After the death of Edward the Confessor, Harald had a certain claim to the English crown, and took a great fleet there to gain it. He fell at Stamford Bridge, only days before the Normans landed at Hastings.

I have given all this biography here because most of the translations I have on hand are from Harald himself or his chief skald, the Iclander Thjodholf Arnason. It will reduce the amount of explanation necessary for these selections. In closing, here is a typical poem of praise, composed by Thjodholf for Harald while they were sailing toward England:

I heard that mighty Harald
held full eighteen battles.
All were bloody — often
urged the chieftain peace-breach.
Eagles' claws you colored,
king, ere wending homeward;
and the wolves were eating
everywhere you tarried.

Amra vol. 2 no. 10 1960



TAMFORD BRIDGE

POUL ANDERSON

Harald Hardrede, King of Norway, having failed to get the Danish crown, thought of climaxing his wildly adventurous career with the conquest of England, to which he had some claim. It was said that the Housecarles of King Harold Godwinsson were giants, each of them a match for any two Norsemen. Ulf Ospaksson, the old marshal of the Norse King, then made a verse of counsel:

If each single ax
of England's guards counts double
(surely I'll not shrink
from shining plunder elsewhere),
I will not be eager
England-ward to travel —
once in youth, O woman
was I bolder-hearted.

Nonetheless, Harald gathered a fleet for the invasion. While it lay at anchor off an island, September AD 1066, the saga says that a royal guardsman named Gyrddh had a dream. He saw a giant troll-wife standing on shore, with a sword in one hand and a trough in the other. As she looked over the ships, Gyrddh saw that each had a bird on its prow, all eagles or ravens.

She chanted:

Eager from the eastlands
is the king now westbound
to meet the old Man-reaper,
much unto my pleasure.
Birds await a baleful
booty on his vessels:
suet for the starving,
such as I will give them.

Weathering a great storm, the Norse fleet reached Orkney to meet Harald's allies, sailed south harrying and plundering, defeated one English army and occupied the city of York. On Monday, the 5th of September, King Harald went to Stamford Bridge with a number of his men, to meet certain English leaders and receive hostages from them as agreed. But Harold Godwinsson of England had marched unbelievably fast from the south. Suddenly the Norse were confronted with the enemy king himself, and an armored host. Because the day was hot and no such thing had been expected, most of the Norse had left their own mail behind. After the famous interchange, where he was offered seven feet of English earth for his own, or as much more as he was taller than other men, Harald Hardrede prepared for battle. He made a verse:

Forward go we
in the fylking,
without byrnies,
under blued edges;
helmets gleam,
we have no mail:
useless it shines
upon the ships.

"That was poorly made," he said; "I must try to do better." And he composed:

Creep not 'neath the crooked
shields when called to battle

frightened at the fighting —
so spoke the faithful woman.
High she bade me hold
my head in storms of iron
when sharpened steel is swinging
down on skulls and helmets.

Thjodholf Arnason, his chief skald, replied:

I do not mean ever
your heirs to leave, my master,
if this clash now claims you.
(That comes which God has willed us.)
Sunlight never struck
on such a pair of princes:
Harald's sons, like hawks both,
unhooded to avenge him.

The battle was long and hard, with great loss on both sides. At last Harald Hardrede was struck by an arrow. Thjodholf hurried to him where he fell. The king said, "I have held up your head long enough; now do you hold up mine." He died, and while the English broke the Norse, Thjodholf stood weeping and made a last verse:

Hard has it gone with the host now,
hopelessly are we standing;
for little gain has our lord here
led us into the Westlands.
Lying there with his life gone,
he of all lords most valiant,
few has he left to follow —
fallen our King and our hope now.

— (after the ON by Poul Anderson)

The Free-Speaking Verses

by Poul Anderson

(When the youthful Magnus Olafsson became king of Norway, he proceeded so harshly against all who had opposed his father and any who now gainsaid him that revolt in Sogn shire looked imminent. A council of the land's leading men decided (circa 1040 AD) that he must be warned and admonished. This dangerous task fell on Sighvat Thordharson, greatest of the skalds, who had been among the late King Olaf's most loyal followers and Magnus' godfather. He entered the royal hall in the evening, when the king and his men were drinking together, and after getting permission to speak, he recited that poem which has since been remembered as **Bersöglisvisur, The Free-Speaking Verses**. Unfortunately, I do not have a complete text on hand, only those parts quoted in the **Heimskringla**; but then the omitted stanzas are chiefly a recounting of how former kings had respected the law and the rights of the people, or suffered for it if they did not. This noble poem actually accomplished its purpose. Civil war was avoided and Magnus became so mild and just a ruler that he has ever after been called Magnus the Good.)

It's said, I hear, that Sighvat
seeks to turn his master
from strife against the Sognmen.
Myself I'll hie to battle:
go beneath your banner —
But lawlessness in the land,
how long must we endure it?

• • • •

Atheling, be not angry
when honest friends give counsel,
warning open-worded,
wanting but to serve you.
Landsmen will not lout

to laws which are another
and worse rule than awaited,
as well you must remember.

• • • •

Who has urged your hasty
heart to breaking pledges?
Much too often, master,
make you use of sword-edge.
Ever should the honor
of the king be steadfast;
little is the love
for lawless, faithless rulers.

• • • •

Ill it is when all
the older men speak war-words,
gathering against you:
get it stopped, and swiftly!
Know, when men say nothing,
nodding silent, lowering
heads in hairy coats —
then harm and danger threaten.

• • • •

Holy bonds that hold us
have made me wish a healing.
Wait not till the wicked
weapons flash, but help us
Grant this boon, my godson!
Gladly then we'll serve you.
Go with peace, not glaive,
and give your people freedom!

— Sighvat Thordharson

(tr. from the ON by Poul Anderson)

Amra vol. 2 no. 29 1964

The Loss of a Son

by Eigill Skallagrimsson

translated by Poul Anderson

When Eigill Skallagrimsson, viking and skald of the tenth century, was in his old age in Iceland, he lost his only remaining son to a storm at sea and declared that now he himself would die. He lay down in his bed and refused food or drink. His daughter told him he should at least honor her brother's memory with a poem. Agreeing to this, he composed the *Sonatorrek*, one of the finest works in all early Nordic literature. As he made the verses and spoke them forth, the heart slowly came back to him; at the end, he rose and was ready to live on.

The best translation into a modern language is surely E R Eddison's, in his Englishing of the entire Eigill saga. However, this is hard to come by. (Won't some farsighted publisher ever reprint it?) Furthermore, it is so extremely accurate as to require close reading. And, finally, since no translation is perfect, those who cannot read an original can always improve their understanding of it by comparing other versions.

Johannes V Jensen's free rendition into Danish is the basis of my attempt which follows.

I find it toilsome
to move my tongue;
a stone on the breast
will stop the breath.
It's hard to wage
the witchcraft of words
when a storm overthrows
the house of thought.

The skaldic gift,
worthy of gods,
above all others
since olden time,

is locked away;
it will not leave
the hoard of the soul,
because of sorrow.

Hastily, happily,
words long heeded me;
the weapon of wit
was kept well sharpened.
But the surf now surges
to smash my boatshed
and beats on the door
of my father's barrow.

For now my family
nears its finish
like a woodland
laid waste by wind.
That main has lost
his merriment
who's seen his dearest
borne dead indoors.

First I mind me
my father's ending.
Soon my mother
was missing too.
In the inmost soul
a memory is
of those, the old ones,
endlessly.

That hole the billow
broke in the ancient
fence of my father's
family grieves me.
But the wound of my son
slain by the sea,

I know it will always,
always be open.

Of much has Ran,
the sea, bereaved me.
Alone is the one
whom no one loves.
My cords of kinship
the sea has cut,
and broken the thread
of life in my breast.

Could I but seize
my rights with a spear,
then the destroyer
would soon be done for.
Could a mark be made
on that wet thief-murderer,
gladly I'd fight
against the sea.

But I have found
my powers too few
to battle against
the bane of my son.
Open it is
for all to see
how the old
are helpless grown.

Of much has Ran,
the sea, bereaved me.
Woe at kin-death
is late overwon,
latest when he,
the hope of the race
is taken off hence
to a brighter home.

I know myself
that in my son
no mark of meanness
was ever made.
Strength and soundness
would have been seen,
had not Odin
laid hand upon him.

Ever were he
and I as one,
whatever else
others might do.
My house
he upheld,
the prop
of Its pillars.

Often I felt
the lack of a fellow.
Bare is the back
of the brotherless.
This truth I recall
when trouble arises:
long are the eyes
of a man alone.

Where now can be found
a trusty friend,
staunchly undaunted
by the steel?
Lacking joy,
you must go gently,
as ever the number
of friends is narrowed.

Shake, if you will,
the shire in searching,

there lives not a one
on whom to rely.
Here they'll barter
a brother for weregild
and make revenge
a merchandise!

They say, and it's so,
if a son is lost,
no regaining is given
save begetting another;
nor is there hope
of filling the hole
left by a brother
with the first and broadest.

I do not care
for crowds of men.
Peace brings nothing
but priggishness.
My boy who is dead,
a bit of his mother,
he has fared hence
to the home of his fathers.

The foe of the ships,
the foaming one,
the slayer of men,
stands against me.
Strengthlessly,
when sorrow drives,
blunders the heavy
burden of thoughts.

My other son,
struck by sickness,
wasted away
and wended hence.

He was a boy
without a blemish,
not by anyone
ill bespoken.

I can't forget
how the giver of life
grabbed the gift
again for himself,
the bloom of the race,
the blood of my blood,
and of my household
all the hope.

With the lord of life
I lay at peace.
Most carefully
I kept the pact,
till Odin himself,
the owner of fate,
freely and willingly
ended friendship.

I readily offered
to All-Father Odin,
the first of the gods,
since folk are wont to.
Yet I must find
for the father of skalds
that which is more
than might, in misfortune.

From the bane of the wolf,
old shedder of blood,
I got some faultless
featlinesses,
therewith a soul
that soon turned some

lurkingly envious
to open foemen.

Hard am I hit.
Now stands Hel,
the unrelenting,
out on the ness.
Yet I will gladly
and good of heart
await the day
when I shall die.

Amra vol. 2 no. 52 1969

Poetry by L. Sprague de Camp

Ghost Ships

by L. Sprague de Camp

The ghosts of ships were gathered at a harbor in the sky;
I saw a swarm of vessels, great and small, from years of yore,
From proas, junks, and triremes to the liners looming high.
The warships formed a snobbish club, their feats to glorify,
And boasted of their battles in the lengthy log of war.

A graceful, clinkered galley, with a dragon at her prow,
Proclaimed, "I hight *Great Serpent*, and by Christus and by Thor,
"I was the finest ship King Olaf made the main to plow.
"I bore him to his hero's battle-death at Svold; but now
"This coward's tool, the gun, has spoiled the noble game of war."

Then spake the three-deck *Victory*, with spritsails at her head:
"You're but an overgrown canoe, despite your length of oar.
"I was the boast of Britain's fleet, when scuppers ran with red.
"Aboard me at Trafalgar, deathly wounded, Nelson bled;
"But now these damned steam engines take the glory out of war."

The hulking paddle-frigate *Mississippi* then began:
"The twain of you are out of date; but I, ten years before
"I perished on a river bar, did open up Japan
"(Which some would say was rash) as Perry's flagship; but this plan
"Of iron-plating ships has drained the honor out of war."

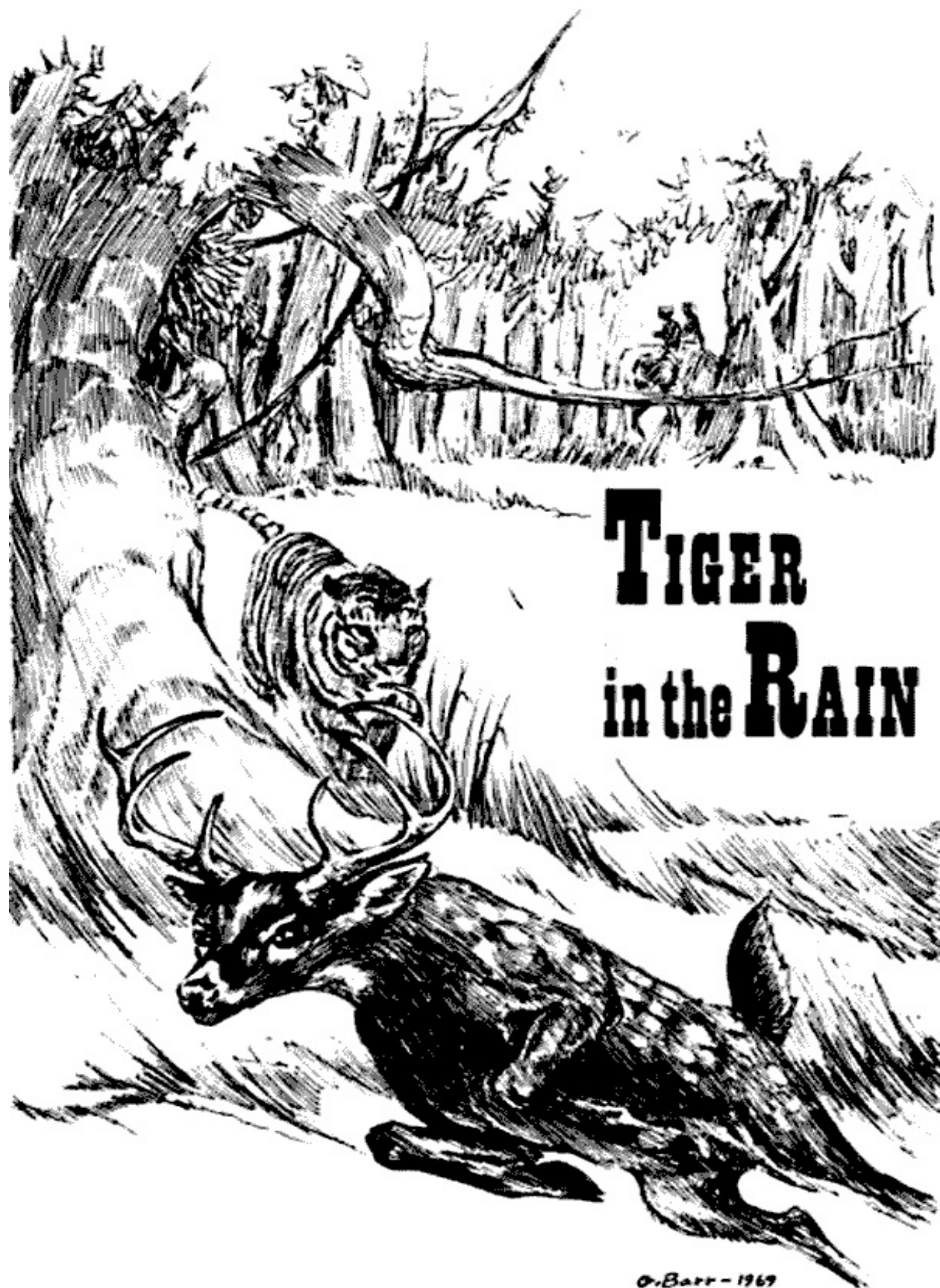
A burly British battleship, the *Warspite*, spoke at last:
"I've waged two wars, the like of which was never known before.
"At Jutland and at Matapan, the foeman felt my blast;
"But heavy guns are silent now, their days of thunder past.
"Those beastly, bloody aeroplanes have ruined naval war."

A huge, lopsided carrier, the *Enterprise*, professed:
"I own my life was not so long as yours but swear my score
"Of battles fought, from Midway to Nippon, is still the best.

“But though my sisters scour the sea, they sail with little zest;
“Those villainous atomic bombs have spoiled the art of war.”

An old Phoenician bireme eyed a nuclear submarine
And spake as follows to the ships in accents harsh and hoar:
“The next big fray our makers fight may end the earthly scene.
“If any live, they’ll fight from bark canoes in broils marine;
“So take your sentimental leave of human naval war!”

Amra vol. 2 no. 47 1968



TIGER
in the **RAIN**

O. Barr - 1969

I once saw a tiger run through the rain,
From elephant-back upon Assam's plain.
He galloped full-tilt at a herd of deer,
Which grazed on the edge of a thicket of cane.

The deer fled away from his onslaught grim;
I wanted a picture, but the light was too dim.
He glared about him and entered the cane;
He bothered me not, nor did I him.

But I thought that I ought to have tipped my hat
As he bounded over the marshy flat,
For there went the oldest foe of my race:
The cave-man's nightmare, the giant cat.

Today that cat, who so hungrily ran,
Survives on sufferance, at truce with man.
For man has mastered the beasts; instead,
Now men upon other men prey as they can.

And thus I thought on that lush, green plain,
As I watched that tiger run through the rain.

In a Lighter Vein

John Carper and his Electric Barsoom

by Thomas Stratton

In a lovely golden garden in the capitol city of the country of Hydrogen sat the bold heroic figure of John Carper, Jedackack of all Barsoom, holding close to his bold heroic chest the pure and beautiful form of his mate, the lovely Jedackackess of all Barsoom, Disha Thorax.

They were, as one might expect of the Jedackack and Jedackackess of all Barsoom, discussing the welfare of their loyal and devoted subjects. They had been pursuing this patriotic line of discussion for many hours when another bold heroic figure cleared the twenty-foot garden wall in a leap and a half. It was, they saw as the figure approached them in leaps and bounds, revealing itself to be not quite so bold and heroic as John Carper himself, their only hatched son, Cathartic.

“Father!” John Carper’s son, the fruit of his loins, cried, “I come to you now to ask your aid, for you are even more bold and heroic than I. That lovely creature, second only in beauty and purity to my beloved mater, the fragile and delicate Vethuvias, has been taken captive, placed in durance vile by the infamous Tortoisians. She — oh vision of loveliness that she is! — has been taken far across the dead sea bottoms to the barren, wasted Polar Regions, the only place on all of Barsoom where your power, oh bold heroic father, does not extend. So I ask of you the boon of your incomparable succor in this hour of my greatest need and sorrow.”

John Carper, Jedackack of all Barsoom, disengaged himself gently from the lovely arms of the beautiful Disha Thorax, and rose slowly and thoughtfully to his feet. He looked at the noble countenance of his only hatched son Cathartic, and seeing there the same Earthly strain of courage, strength, and loyalty which flowed in his own noble veins, made his decision. “Here, son,” he said. “You may take my air rifle and may all the gods of Barsoom go with you!”

“Oh great warrior and husband of mine!” spoke the incomparable vision of beauty that was Disha Thorax, “do not jest at a time like this! Do you not remember how you, John Carper, felt when I, Disha Thorax, was torn from your bold heroic bosom when you first came to Barsoom?”

“You are right, my beloved one,” the Jedackack replied. He turned again

to Cathartic. “You may have the services of my army, and my faithful friend and companion through all my intrepid adventures, the six legged Barsoomian dog, Moola, will accompany you as will my other loyal and beloved battle companion, that great green warrior, Kars Karkas. This will, of course, leave the capitol city of Hydrogen unguarded, but. . . .”

The magnificent Jedackack of all Barsoom hesitated; modesty forbade him to continue. He motioned discreetly to the shimmering vision of loveliness that rose gracefully from the ersatz bench. “But of course,” Disha Thorax continued, “Cathartic, my beloved and only-hatched son, your father, being as bold and heroic as he is, will be well able to hold off any trouble until you return with the army. Besides, we killed off all our enemies in the last book.”

Thus it was that, backed by the mightiest (in fact the only) army-on Barsoom and its third greatest warrior in the person of the giant Kars Karkas, and led on by the keen sixth sense of smell of the greatest Culotte of all Barsoom, Moola, Cathartic, the second greatest warrior of all Barsoom, set out on his quest for the second loveliest woman of all Barsoom.

Needless to say, he succeeded thumpingly.

Back across the red-cruised desert, the winding canals, the deathless dead sea bottoms, wound the great retinue, carrying aloft on a litter of gold and silver and precious stones, the fantastically beautiful Vethuvias, lovely maid of Mars. Back to the capitol of Hydrogen, where the great retinue lowered the litter of gold and silver and precious stones with a sigh of relief and collapsed.

“Hail, Father!” spoke Cathartic, I have succeeded in my quest for the second most lovely woman of Barsoom, and I return, grown greater in stature because of my recent valiant deeds.”

“My only hatched son, it does my noble heart good to find that you are following in my bold and heroic footsteps. By the way, has your arduous journey diminished your princely strength in any wise?”

“No, father. I still feel that I am the second strongest mortal in Barsoom.”

“Good. I have received disquieting reports concerning the legendary Puce Pirates of Phobos. How about running out there and checking up for me?”

“I am yours to command. Despite the fact that I have but returned from a cruel journey, and have only been re-united with the second loveliest woman in all Barsoom, I am ready to follow you to the end of the Universe!” (“And

push you off,” he added to himself.)

“Follow. . . . Hmm . . . well, that wasn’t exactly . . . oh, well, never mind. My son, with you beside me, nothing in the Universe can deter me.”

Thus, as the golden orb of the sun rises over Hydrogen the next morning, we find a caravan of Barsoomian flyers, bearing John Carper, Cathartic, Kars Karkas, Disha Thorax, Vethuvias, Moola, and scores of extras, also rising over the quiet city. John Carper, Jedackack of all Barsoom, has begun his quest for the Phantom Puce Pirates of Phobos, surely one of the strangest episodes in his gallant career!

The flyers rose higher in the Barsoomian morning; Disha Thorax and Vethuvias were sunning themselves on the top deck of the flagship, just in front of the flagpole. The glories of Barsoom spread out beneath the ascending ships. The magnificent, awe-inspiring dead sea bottoms were. What more need be said? Anyone who has had the inestimable privilege of viewing their grandeur has had the glorious magnificence of those incredibly awe-inspiring sights driven ineradicably into his mind, and no further word by me could in any way enhance those memories; and for those who have not, mere words could not do sufficient justice to those glorious monuments to the wondrous past of this ancient, time-honored planet.

Higher and higher still the flyers soared. The dead sea bottoms fell farther behind. Now the curve of the horizon could be seen, and the white glitter of the snowfields around the pole; the growing chill of the atmosphere forced Disha Thorax and Vethuvias to retire inside the flyer. Armed guards, shivering in uniforms more suited to the desert than this arctic altitude (Barsoom had a lousy quartermaster service), patrolled the decks. Now, ahead of the valiant company, could be seen the jagged, snow-capped peaks of Phobos, the larger moon of Barsoom.

“Hold!” shouted John Carper, striding across the deck of the flagship, “Cease! Halt! Desist!”

The crew looked up from their various duties of patrolling the deck, steering, navigating, scraping barnacles from the hull and each other. “Sir,” asked the captain, “what great wisdom and knowledge causes Your Imperial Jedackackishness to call upon this indomitable, invincible, indestructible, and altogether incomparable warfleet to stop?”

The Jedackack, suffering from one of his brilliant flashes of genius, replied, “Is this not a flyer? A flyer which requires air in which to fly? Is there air between Barsoom and Phobos? No! Therefore. . . .”

“Father!” It was his only hatched son, Cathartic, standing before him on the wind-whipped airless deck. “You must have faith!”

The mighty John Carper appeared sad for a moment, then regained his Jedackackish composure. “You are right, my son! Sail on — to the jagged snow-capped peaks of Phobos!”

But were these the jagged snow-capped peaks of Phobos? It has been truly said that faith can move mountains; but could faith put snow caps on mountains? Especially when there were no mountains there in the first place?

But of course! In a blinding flash of brilliant insight, it was all clear to John Carper: this was not Phobos before them! It was a cleverly constructed and camouflaged artificial moon, and the jagged snow-capped mountains were not jagged snow-capped mountains at all; they were in reality, he realized, ingeniously disguised gigantic weapons, the peaks being the deadly muzzles. And the Puce Pirates had those weapons trained upon them AT THAT VERY MOMENT!

All this he realized in less time than it takes me to tell it. [Anything takes less time than it takes you to tell it.] Even so, it was too late, for the brilliant flash, he also realized an instant later, was not from his scintillating intellect, but from the firing of those incredible weapons.

It was indeed fortunate for that gallant expedition that Cathartic had seen the danger a moment before. The flagship heeled sharply, and the bolts of ravaging energy flashed past, scorching the paint on the bridge. At the same moment, Cathartic loosed a broadside from the port guns. Luckily, John Carper’s hawklike eyes found it almost immediately. The entire fleet was now taking evasive action.

Flashing streaks of cosmic energy flamed between the fleet and the floating fort. With John Carper bellowing orders from the bridge of the flagship, the Barsoomian fleet began to close with the enemy. At last, two of the ships grounded on the artificial moon, and the Jedackack gave the order: “Boarders away!”

Swarms of chartreuse men, the deadliest fighters (except for John Carper and Cathartic) on Barsoom, poured onto the surface of the moon. Led by the bold and heroic Jedackack and his only hatched son, they were met by the Puce Pirates, and their allies, the magenta-and-heliotrope men of Deimos, in hand-to-hand combat. It was a colorful spectacle.

Meanwhile, back at the flagship, Vethuvias and Disha Thorax had crept quietly up the catwalk for a clearer conception of the cataclysmic chaos into

which they had been catapulted. But no sooner had they attained the deck of the craft than it tilted sharply sideways, dumping them precipitately onto the surface of the hostile artificial moon. The leader of the Puce Pirates, Argh Grghrd, took quick advantage of this by snatching them from under the very eyeballs of John Carper and Cathartic, not to mention Kars Karkas and the army, and swiftly secured them in his private quarters, inside the moon.

The battle raged on!

And on!

Finally, however, the smoke of battle (a spark from the clashing swords had started a fire) cleared away, and it could be seen that the forces of Evil had been crushed once more or less. Seeing their army destroyed, Argh Grghrd and his lieutenant, Mrumph, retreated below the surface of the moon.

Hot on the heels of the hellions hove the Heroes, hardly hesitating a hectare. (Barsoomian time unit barely worth mentioning.) Down through the labyrinthine, tortuous, twisting tunnels and carved passageways they battled; into depths lighted only by sparks from the clashing swords. At last, they arrived at the inner chambers where waited the two visions of beauty for which, subconsciously so far, this war (and countless others) had been waged and won.

As the two Heroes leaped into the room, Carper cried, “Unhand those visions of loveliness, you foul fiends, or you will have me — and my only hatched son, Cathartic — to deal with!”

“For that matter,” added Cathartic, a practical soul, “you have us to deal with already.”

“My bold heroic, only hatched son is correct,” Carper affirmed. “And. . . .” he gestured subtly to Disha Thorax and Vethuvias.

“And they are,” chorused the visions of loveliness, “the mightiest fighting men on all Barsoom.”

“True,” admitted Argh, evincing more courage than was usual for those of his ilk possibly because he had a small blaster trained on the mightiest fighting men of all Barsoom,, “But,” he continued, “you are not now on Barsoom!”

In a few moments, Barsoom had a new Jedackack.

All of us who daily delve into the musty volumes of the history of the Hyborian ages know that the most famous of all the historical figures, Conan, is known only from the scattered pieces of legendary found in the incomplete collection of “The Nemedian Chronicles”. Many riddles of his life are still unsolved. Researchers have torn their hair, groaning with frustration, asking, among other things, “*What* did Conan do, between the recorded tales, with the women he always managed to acquire?” Quite recently, however, certain information on this problem has come to light.

The Agent

Being an Attempt to Solve One of the Most Enigmatic Mysteries in the Career of Conan

by Björn Nyberg

The man was heavy, fleshy. He sat comfortably and quietly in the big chair at the long table. There was darkness, both in the room and outside, broken only by an occasional, ghostly flash of light. A single lamp in the room cast a soft glow over the furnishings. The thick rug deadened every sound.

There was a knock on the door. It swung open. A man stood framed in the doorway.

From booted feet to unconfined black mane, he was a giant in height, with powerful muscles rippling beneath the bronzed skin. His eyes were a smouldering blue, their glance penetrating like a pair of icy spears. His left hand rested on the pommel of a heavy broadsword at his left hip. His mantle was torn and stained.

“Welcome, Conan,” said the occupant of the room, rising. “You are late. I have been expecting you for two hours. What kept you? Did you get anything for me?”

“I would have been here much earlier,” growled the Cimmerian, “if those cursed Picts hadn’t tried to bar my way. Five of them lie in the swamps of the Tauran with cleft skulls, meat for the carrion eaters. I have a girl for you.”

“Good! The last one you brought here proved herself very talented. A Brythunian, I think you said. What about this one?”

“She’s a Corinthian, of noble blood, or at least that is what she avers.

She's a comely and spirited lass."

"Not too spirited, I hope. The Shemitish woman you brought here the time before last broke the nose of one of my men during the preparations for her first performance. I don't want any more of that."

The Cimmerian vented his mirth in a roaring laugh. "You'd better hire a Turanian slave whipper then! Shall I get one for you?"

"No, Conan. Joking aside, the girls have generally proved docile. Here is your payment."

From a strangely fashioned cupboard he took a bag, clinking with metal, and thrust it across the table. The Cimmerian pocketed it with the deftness of a former leader of the Zamoran thieves.

"Any trouble with your equipment, Conan?"

"No, and I hope there won't be any. I would not like to be stranded in emptiness. Until next time, then! I am for the nearest tavern."

He swung his arm up in salute, turned about, and was gone, his steps echoing in the corridor outside. The other man stood a while at the table, pondering. Then he pressed a projection on a curious device and spoke, seemingly to the empty room, like a magician addressing his familiar: "Bring in the new girl! And start thinking up a name for her!"

His eyes rested, unseeing, upon the still open door, where the dim light illuminated the legend on the frosted glass doorpanel:

William H. Carmody
Talent Scout & Theatrical Agent
Hollywood California

Amra vol. 2 no. 5 1959

Carter's Little Whisky Stills (The Thark Hath Pearly Teeth, Dear)

by John Boardman

Before John Carter went to Mars to fight with gun and foil,
He liked a dram of potent Scotch to end a long day's toil,
And though in most things he was pleased with life upon Barsoom,
At times he wished he'd placed a flask within his earthly tomb.

Tars Tarkas, seeing him downcast, then asked him, "Why so blue?"
And Carter told his monstrous friend about the Highland's dew.
Surprised, the green man said to him, "We too can do this deed.'
My tribe distills a tasty drink from dead-sea-bottom weed!"

The doubtful Warlord asked to try the Martian whiskey then,
And Tars took out a bottle and a glass, and cried, "Say when!"
John Carter took a sip, and smiled, and drank a mighty draught.
Said he, "No Scot on all Jasoom distills with such a craft!"

And ever since, that whiskey bears his "By Appointment" mark
Right underneath the brand name, which, of course, is Cutty Thark.

thkald: John Boardman